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NATIONAL REVIEW

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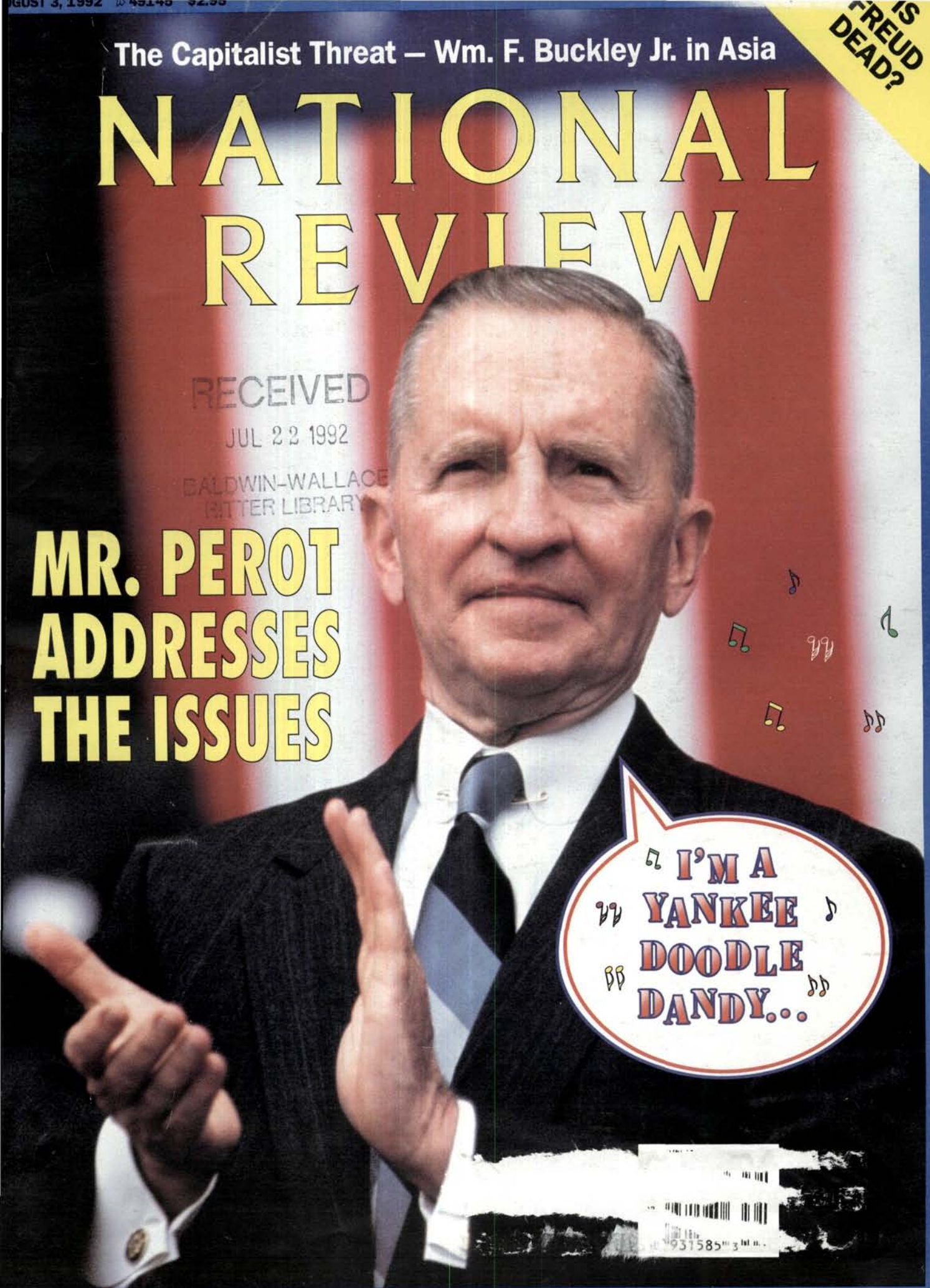

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NATIONAL REVIEW

AUGUST 3, 1992 VOL. XLIV, NO. 15

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Cover Story

24 ***Meet Ross Perot***
Ross Perot is often right about how badly Washington works, but is he the man to fix it? After a close look at Perot's positions, **Hadley Arkes** concludes that he would, indeed, give us something completely different. . . . **Tom Bethell** asks our top economists: Can a self-made man succeed where the old-money men of the Bush Administration failed? . . . . To **Ben C. Toledano**, the best case for Perot isn't made by the people who support him, but by his critics.

Articles

16 ***On the Scene***
Do the Democrats *really* have their act together? **William McGurn** assesses the situation from the floor at Madison Square Garden. . . . Bankrupt, India is finally abandoning socialism, but **Mary McSherry** reports that in that fractious, crowded land, change is a chancy thing.

34 ***Why Do American Children Learn So Little?***
Our schools deliver so few brains for the buck, **Ernest van den Haag** argues, because we make childhood an end in itself, rathern than an apprenticeship for future adults.

36 ***The Ecstasies of John Frohnmayer***
It is not your typical public servant, notes **Richard Grenier**, who can celebrate Mapplethorpe and Serrano with Shaker hymns and T. S. Eliot.

Cover photo: Steve Starr / SABA

Books, Arts & Manners

38 In *Money Mischief*, his latest blend of history and economic theory, Milton Friedman is as heretical, readable, and prophetic as ever, though **Alan Reynolds** dares to differ with the master. . . . Has Freud poisoned the West, as E. Fuller Torrey argues in *Freudian Fraud*? **Joseph Adelson** offers a second opinion. . . . Intelligence exposés are a wilderness of mirrors, sighs **Ralph de Toledano**: of the current crop, only Angelo Codevilla can tell the spies from the frauds. . . . **Paul West** wishes the characters in *Clockers*, Richard Price's novel of the crack ghetto, were as gripping as their world. . . . With Communism a laughingstock, is the literary fellow-traveler extinct? Not at the *New York Times*, warns **James Bowman**. . . . Michelle Pfeiffer in leather, Madonna demure: **John Simon** still gives two thumbs down to *Batman* and *A League of Their Own*. . . . The Guggenheim remains unfit for man or art; **James Gardner** thinks Louis Kahn would have done better. . . . Feminism vs. multiculturalism: the loser, **Erich Eichman** learns, is taste.

56 ***The Misanthrope's Corner***
Florence King's favorite fictional misanthrope shines through even Dickens's treacle.

Sections

2 ***Letters***
4 ***From the Editor***
6 ***For the Record***
8 ***The Week***
22 help
49 ***Books in Brief***
51 ***Trans-O-Gram***
54 ***On the Right***

The Audit Bureau

NATIONAL REVIEW (ISSN: 0028-0038) is published bi-weekly, except for the first issue in January, by National Review, Inc., at 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices. ©National Review, Inc., 1992. Address all editorial mail, manuscripts, letters to the editor, etc. to Editorial Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016. Address all subscription mail orders, changes of address, undeliverable copies, etc. to Circulation Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, P.O. Box 96639, Washington, D.C. 20090-6639; phone, 301-350-7258, Monday–Friday, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. Eastern time. Adjustment requests should be accompanied by a current mailing label or facsimile. Direct classified advertising inquiries to: Classifieds Dept., National Review, 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016 or call 212-679-7330. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Circulation Dept., NATIONAL REVIEW, P. O. Box 96639, Washington, D.C. 20090-6639.

RATES: $57.00 a year (25 issues). Add $21.50 for Canada and other foreign subscriptions, per year. (All payments in U.S. currency.) The editors cannot be responsible for unsolicited manuscripts unless return postage or, better, a stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Opinions expressed in signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the editors.

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LETTERS

Watergate

I'd hoped that the month-long self-congratulatory media orgy over Watergate's Twentieth Anniversary would end without further bloodletting. So I was dismayed and dispirited by *NR*'s endorsement of *Silent Coup* and its revisionist intent ["Watergate Investigated," July 6]. More particularly, by James S. Rosen's acceptance of the assertion that I had given a key to Eugenio Martinez prior to the burglary, and told Colodny "that Ida Wells's desk—not Larry O'Brien's—was the break-in target." Neither allegation is true.

If the slander/libel action of John and Maureen Dean reaches court, I expect to have a good deal more to say on this and related subjects. Until then, I will merely repeat my reply to an interviewer who asked if I expected the twentieth anniversary of Watergate to produce "new facts": "Unlikely, since journalists can't accurately report the old."

E. Howard Hunt
Miami, Fla.

Mr. Hunt's denial that he gave Eugenio Martinez the key to Ida Wells's desk is on record, in Silent Coup. *But consider Mr. Hunt's January 16, 1991, conversation with Len Colodny. Mr. Colodny began by asking Mr. Hunt if he had provided the break-in targets to Mr. Martinez:*

EHH: Yes, I gave Martinez the target, sure.

LC: And Martinez said the target was not Larry O'Brien.

EHH: Of course not!

LC: Was it Wells or [R. S.] Oliver?

EHH: Well, no, no, I can't, uh, no, they just happened to be on the same phone.

LC: But Martinez is saying that the target was [Ida Wells's] desk.

EHH: The target was a file safe. We were looking for account books . . . to reflect any unexplained donations from Castro's Cuba.

Perhaps one of the "related subjects" Mr. Hunt will illuminate in the trial is why, if the burglars sought donation records, they were apprehended near Miss Wells's desk, and not near that of the DNC Treasurer, which was about as far away from where the burglars were caught as—Larry O'Brien's desk. — JSR

Missing the Boat

Thanks to Peter Brimelow and *NR* for the thoughtful essay on immigration ["Time to Rethink Immigration," June 22]. The problem of assimilating new immigrants is not only that they are overwhelmingly from non-European cultures, but also that they arrive legally privileged compared to native-born white males. The 1991 Civil Rights Act stripped white males of the equal protection granted by the 1964 Act. Now reverse discrimination is required to meet quotas. American democracy has turned privilege on its head. The scion of a founding family is a second-class citizen before the law, without the employment and education privileges conferred upon the new arrival who is a *preferred minority*. He also lacks equal access to courts when he suffers discimination.

Paul Craig Roberts
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Brimelow fails to give any new answers to the essential questions of U.S. immigration policy: 1) Whom and how many do we take; and 2) How do we enforce the law? He does not address the second question, and as for the first question, provides the same tired answer given by every ethnic group: "More people that look like me."

Perhaps Mr. Brimelow's most serious intellectual failure is his insistence on formulating immigration policy on racial lines. He cites figures about the future racial composition of the U.S. as if race were destiny and disaster would result from a shift in our racial composition. When he decries the effect of immigrant-generated population growth on the environment while arguing that Americans could increase their birthrate to cope with future labor-force shortages, he implictly suggests that the *real* reason for curbing immigration is to maintain the racial hegemony of white Americans.

More seriously, Mr. Brimelow fails to mention that many immigrants from the "Third World" (by this Mr. Brimelow clearly means non-white, uneducated people) are *qualitatively* improving the demographic profile of the United States. Asian Indians are more than *four times* as likely to be college graduates than native-born Americans (66.2 per cent versus 16.3 per cent), as are immigrants from the Philippines (three times as likely), and Korea (twice as likely). These groups all have higher median incomes than native-born Americans. Immigrants from South America also have a higher percentage of college graduates. As for African immigrants, no immigrant group in the U.S. has a higher level of educational attainment. In fact, if U.S. immigration policy were driven by national origins and demographic data, British immigration would be cut, and African immigration would be slightly elevated. (I Speak as a demographer who has spent more than ten years working on U.S. immigration policy.)

Perhaps the worst thing about Mr. Brimelow's article is that it unnecessarily divides groups that should be allies on this issue. This country needs an immigration-reform movement that is inclusive. We need to voice arguments that attract the majority of black and Hispanic Americans rather than scare them off. Until this is done, the flow of both legal and illegal immigrants will march inexorably upward, with all of the problems of uncontrolled immigration, and few of the benefits of a legal flow.

Patrick Burns
Arlington, Va.

The kind remarks of Mr. Roberts, a founder of supply-side economics, show that "economic growth conservatives" are not monolithically committed to indiscriminate immigration.

Mr. Burns's letter typifies the phenomenon of the intelligent reader who misconstrues what others find clear. I did not *advocate higher birthrates. I showed that reversing the tax encroachment on American families is an alternative to mass immigration—if more labor is economically necessary (which I questioned).*

Because immigrants tend to be highly educated or not at all, blind or bigoted immigration advocates easily focus only on the former. But the Current Population Survey reported that in 1988, 36 per cent of male immigrants had "less than 12 years education," versus 15 per cent of native-born Americans.

Mr. Burns's shrill allusion to "the racial hegemony of white Americans" leads me to suspect that he is emotionally unbalanced by discussion of the shifting U.S. ethnic balance. In a demographer, this is like a doctor's fainting at the sight of blood. He should seek another career—or read George Borjas's Friends or Strangers, *in which the deterioration in recent immigrants' skill levels is explained, calmly.* —PB

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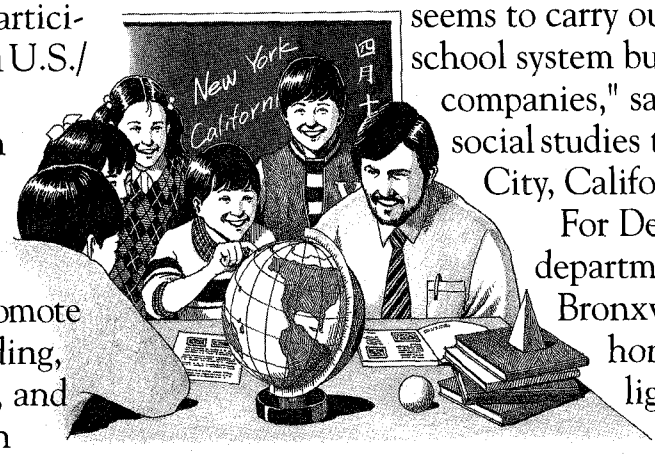
Japan and America: Where the Twain Meet

"Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet," Kipling wrote long ago, and even today that saying sums up the feelings of many Americans and Japanese toward each other. But William Brinker, a high school social studies teacher from Farmington Hills, Michigan, disagrees. "The gulf between our cultures exists, but it can be bridged. We just have to work harder at understanding one another."

Brinker was a participant in the annual U.S./Japan Teachers Exchange Program sponsored by Hitachi. Now in its fourth year, this exchange helps promote mutual understanding, cultural awareness, and friendship between our societies on a personal level.



Since 1987, the program has sponsored the visits of 16 American teachers to Japan and five Japanese to the United States. Last year saw the largest exchange so far: four American and three Japanese teachers. For three weeks, they toured the sites, taught children, and lived in the homes of their hosts. For most, it was their first direct exposure to the culture they had so often taught about. Even for Brinker, who had spent time in Japan 36 years ago as a serviceman, the experience was eye-opening. "I came away with a much better understanding of the Japanese people," he says.

As teachers, the American visitors were struck by the way Japanese parents support the school system and the respect students show in the classroom. "The support and love of the family seems to carry out not only in the school system but also into their companies," says Greg Alvarado, a social studies teacher from Daly City, California.

For Delia Grogan-Selby, a department chairperson from Bronxville, New York, the home stay was a highlight of her visit. "I felt like I had parachuted into my own family, but it was Japan," she says.

Hitachi is proud to sponsor the U.S./Japan Teachers Exchange Program. We believe its positive impact will multiply as returning teachers share their personal experiences with students, colleagues, and friends at home.

For more information, write: Hitachi, P.O. Box 7515, Grand Central Station, New York, NY, 10163.

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NATIONAL REVIEW

Issue date: August 3, 1992
Print date: July 15, 1992

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FROM THE EDITOR

Cold-War Conquest

■ It is all too rare, in the confusion and muddle of life, for anyone engaged in political or historical controversy to be unambiguously vindicated. But Robert Conquest, the historian of Stalin's purges, the Ukrainian famine, and Soviet totalitarianism in general, has had his account of these terrible events more than confirmed by the revelations following the failed Soviet coup and the democratic Russian Revolution of 1991.

Indeed, where some Western Sovietologists had previously attacked his careful estimates of Stalin's victims as being exaggerated, official Russian sources now tend to give even higher figures. His works, which once circulated clandestinely in *samizdat*, are serialized in the free Russian press. (His most recent book had an epigraph that would have sounded satirical until just the other day: "Parts of this book appeared previously in *Izvestia* and NATIONAL REVIEW.") And his academic critics, some of whom had put Stalin's victims in the "hundreds of thousands" at most, are themselves sensibly playing dead.

But Dr. Conquest's work was, as Nobel Laureate Czeslaw Milosz pointed out at the dinner to honor him given by the Independent Institute in San Francisco, a moral achievement as well as an intellectual one.

"My experience is enough to comprehend the resistance he had to overcome in order to embark upon his investigations . . ." he said. "The attitude of the overwhelming majority of Western *literati* toward the Communist state ranged from open adulation to silence about such facts as mass murders, mass deportations, artificial famines, and slave labor camps." (We will be publishing Mr. Milosz's remarks in full in a forthcoming issue.)

Such an occasion naturally attracted distinguished people from the world of letters. The other speakers included political theorist Aaron Wildavsky, Yelena Bonner, the widow of Andrei Sakharov and a human-rights campaigner in her own right, and Dr. Conquest himself. But what was equally remarkable was the range and warmth of the messages from the world of politics.

"As millions of people around the world celebrate the collapse of imperial Communism and the emergence of independent states throughout what was once the Soviet empire, it is fitting that we salute a man who did so much to pierce the Iron Curtain and to uphold the light of freedom during the darkest years of the cold war," wrote President Bush. And there were messages also from Presidents Reagan and Nixon, former Secretary of State George Shultz, and Vice President Dan Quayle.

I was asked to speak also, but in such company I thought it wise not to give my correct views about everything.

So I confined myself to reading Mrs. Thatcher's message ("During the years when I sought to strengthen the West's resolve in support of President Reagan's strategy for freedom, I always knew I could draw on Bob Conquest's masterly analysis"), to giving an account of Bob's journalism in England in the 1970s (which foreshadowed many of the themes of Thatcherism), and to celebrating one of his lighter achievements, the limerick:

There was a great Marxist called Lenin,
Who did two or three million men in.
That's a lot to have done in.
But where he did one in,
That grand Marxist, Stalin, did ten in.

But then Bob Conquest is so entertaining that it's sometimes hard to remember he's a great man.

■ I am delighted to announce formally what keen students of our masthead will have noticed in our last issue: that Kate Walsh O'Beirne is joining us as a Contributing Editor.

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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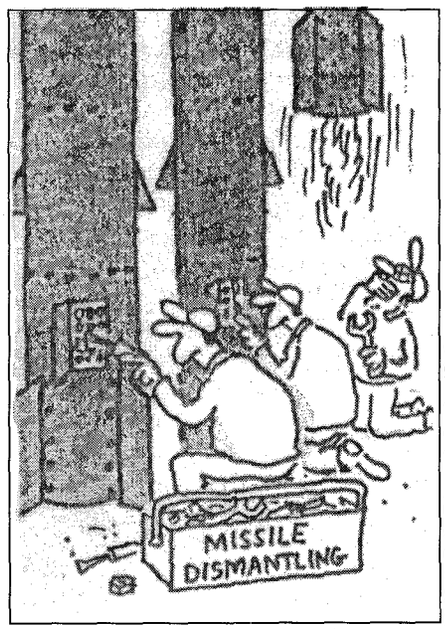
FOR THE RECORD

■ **Bill Clinton** gave the headline writers and pundits a new angle when he picked **Al Gore** as his running-mate: "Good Ol' Boys," was the front-page headline on the *New York Daily News*. . . . **David Broder** of the *Washington Post* pooh-poohed the need for a "balanced ticket": the fact that Tennessee and Arkansas are neighbors, he said, is merely a "geographical oddity." . . . Gore—who was raised mostly in Washington, D.C., during his father's long tenure as senator and who is not known as a backwoodsman—demonstrated his down-home roots by attending an outdoor church meeting in Carthage, Tenn., at which he prayed for atheists, and hoped they wouldn't get mad at him for praying. . . . Many commentators were happy to see the youthfulness of the ticket as "nothing less than the rejuvenation of the Democratic Party," as **R. W. Apple Jr.** put it in the *New York Times*, designed to "banish the crippling image of the Democrats as a tired collection of squabbling special-interest groups." . . . To columnist **Earl Caldwell**, it meant that the party which had its base in the power of big labor and minorities is gone: "The new Democrats are young, white, and middle class." . . . **Jesse Jackson**'s initial reaction to the choice was oracular disdain: "It takes two wings to fly, and here you have two of the same wing." But by the time he reached the convention floor he was talking meekly of "President Bill Clinton."

■ President Clinton has a ways to go before his inauguration, though recent polls show him taking back the second slot from **Ross Perot**. In ABC/*Washington Post* poll taken on eve of the Convention, still-President **Bush** was leading with 33 per cent, to 30 per cent each for Clinton and Perot. CBS/*New York Times* poll taken at same time showed Bush with 33, to 30 for Clinton, and 25 for Perot; in two-way race, it showed Bush and Clinton tied 43 to 43. . . . Bush faces dissension in his own ranks: "I consider Mr. **Brady** and Mr. **Darman** liabilities to the President," complained **Ernest Angelo**, Texas representative on the Republican National Committee. . . . Massachusetts Governor **William Weld**, of the **Paul Tsongas** wing of the Republican Party (tight money, loose morals), is said to be jockeying for an important speaking slot at Republican Convention in Houston. *Boston Herald* columnist **Don Feder** comments: "Might as well turn the podium over to the National Abortion Rights Action League and Queer Nation." . . . Although DNC chairman **Ron Brown** and New York Mayor **David Dinkins** found Perot "insensitive" and "offensive" in his speech to the NAACP, Perot has enlisted Rev. **Calvin Butts** for an active role in his campaign. Butts is heir to **Adam Clayton Powell Jr.** at the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem and the most influential black clergyman in New York.

■ Good news from the Senate race in Idaho, where Republican mayor of Boise, **Dirk Kempthorne**, is hoping to succeed conservative stalwart



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Steve Symms, the apple farmer whose slogan was: "Three boxes guard our liberty—the ballot box, the jury box, and the cartridge box." Kempthorne is a young conservative activist facing a seasoned opponent, four-term Representative **Richard Stallings**, a conservative Democrat. . . . In Massachusetts, homosexual banner-bearer **Gerry Studds** has been shorn by redistricting of his New Bedford power base and now faces a fight with two other Democratic hopefuls. . . . Ten most endangered House Democrats, says Capitol Hill's twice-weekly paper *Roll Call*, are **Richard Ray** and **Ben Jones** (Ga.), **Tony Beilenson** (Calif.—he's the liberal nephew of late anti-Communist author **Laurence Beilenson**), **Ben Erdreich** (Ala.), and **John Cox** (Ill.), all made vulnerable by gerrymandering; check-bouncers **Charlie Wilson** (Tex.), **George Brown** (Calif.), and **Peter Kostmayer** (Pa.); and ultra-liberals **Joan Kelly Horn** (Mo.) and **Mike Synar** (Okla.). . . . Here it comes again: **Rockefeller** Republicanism in New York. **Laurence** ("who likes to be known as Larry"), nephew of **Nelson**, is running against **Al D'Amato** as an environmentalist.

■ Media Notes: The financially precarious, solidly conservative *Sacramento Union* has been purchased by conservative investors **Greg Hardcastle** and **J. J. McClatchy** (whose family founded the competing *Sacramento Bee*). Former editor **Joseph Farah** will return to that post. . . . Among upcoming **Leadership Institute** conservative training schools are Broadcast Journalism (Aug 1–2) and Student Publications (Aug. 8–9). Space is limited; for application/information call **Kristen Plapis** at 800-827-LEAD. . . . The press kit is dead—long live the press valise. Material given out at the Democratic Convention weighs three pounds and includes a canvas mini-duffel from the *New York Times*, a tote bag from CNN, a New York guide from American Express, and a media guide from Delta airlines, plus maps and restaurant guides.

■ **Russell Baker** has the last word on the Clinton–Gore ticket's oratorical skills: "They are the human equivalent of that seacoast town once visited by **Fred Allen**: 'So dull that when the tide went out it never came back.'"

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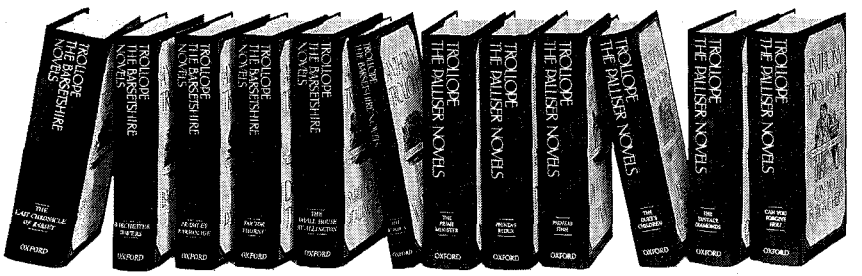

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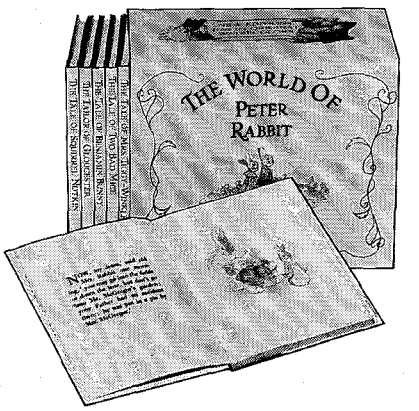

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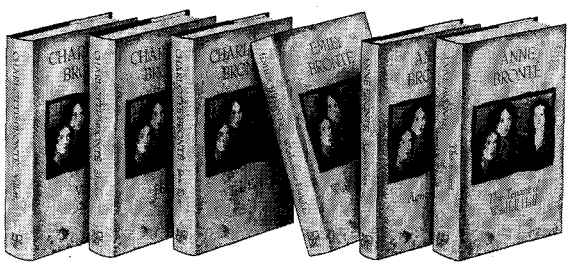

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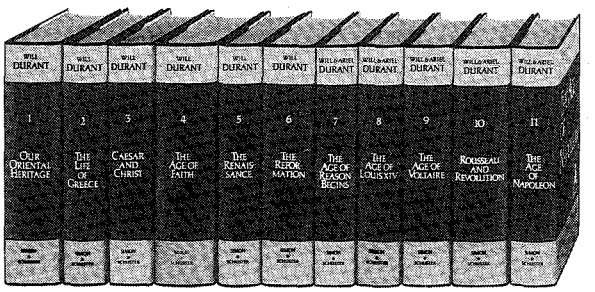
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THE WEEK

■ Funny, but the more "inclusive" the Democrats get, the smaller they get.

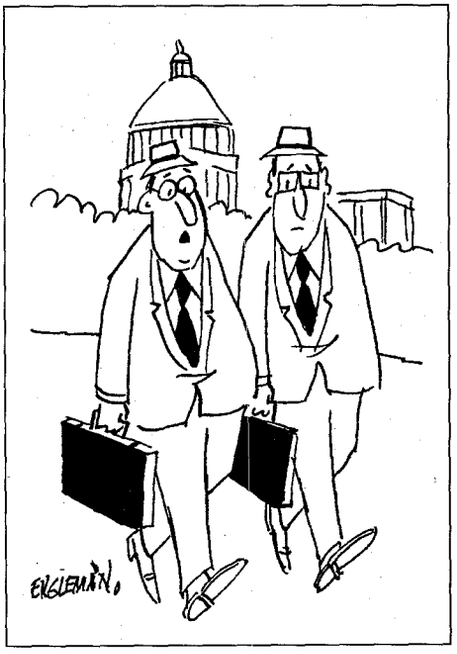
■ A recent *New York Times*/CBS poll showed that 77 per cent of respondents think George Bush is likely to raise taxes if elected, while 75 per cent believe Bill Clinton is, and the only reason we can think of for Clinton's edge is that, since he has promised to raise them, a little skepticism is in order.

■ When Sam Skinner became White House Chief of Staff last January, OMB Director Dick Darman convinced him that their boss's only problem was his failure to communicate his (Darman's) domestic policies. Skinner's six-month search for a new chief speechwriter has ended with the naming of Steven Provost as Assistant to the President for Communications. The 32-year-old Provost hails from Kentucky Fried Chicken, where he has been chief spokesman. Bush backers need not fear that Provost's professional experience has been confined to pitching fowls. His political background includes speechwriting stints with such liberal spellbinders as Congresswomen Millicent Fenwick and Claudine Schneider, and Governor Tom Kean. Apparently Lowell Weicker had no openings on his staff.

■ Provost's years of service crafting the Fenwick–Kean message were clearly a plus with Skinner, but the announcement of Provost's appointment reportedly sent "a ripple of disbelief and anguish" through the White House and campaign headquarters—owing to his inexperience in presidential politics. Provost can be expected, however, to draw on the experience he does have, and all that remains to be seen is whom Bush sounds like when he accepts his party's nomination in Houston next month—Millicent Fenwick or Colonel Sanders.

■ Bill Clinton has ceased promising that the missus will play a key role in his White House. The reason is clear from Daniel Wattenberg's profile of Hillary in the August *American Spectator*. Since her Yale days, Hillary has been enthusiastically engaged with the radical Left. Samples: While she was chairman of the board of the Legal Services Corporation under Jimmy Carter, the LSC improperly used tax money to defeat a California ballot initiative to cut state income taxes in half. While she headed the New World Foundation, it gave grants to such leftist organizations as the fellow-traveling National Lawyers Guild and CISPES (the Committee in Support of the People of El Salvador). As an activist for children's rights, she wrote essays and articles condemning legally established "dependency relationships" for "depriving people of their rights." She explained: "Along with the family, past and present examples of such arrangements include marriage, slavery, and the Indian reservation system." Then again, her principles haven't deterred her from holding lucrative positions on the boards of several huge corporations, and even raking in profits on South African diamonds. Maybe that's what the Democrats mean by moderation.

■ Incidentally, the well-known Soviet sociologist, Raisa Gorbachev, wrote her doctoral thesis on the impact of rural collectivization on the Soviet family in the Stalin era. One of her findings was that the peasants took refuge in their extended family, with grandparents playing a key role in raising the children. To Mrs. Gorbachev, this was deplorable, since it retarded the liberation of the new generation from the cultural shackles of the discredited past. Poor Raisa. History, out of sync, gave her Nancy Reagan as her Summit soulmate.



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"We'd better get re-elected. It would be hard to make it in the business world after the legislation we've passed."

■ The June unemployment rate—an unexpectedly high 7.8 per cent—has raised fears of a "triple dip" recession. But when you take out the "seasonal adjustment" factor in the Labor Department's statistics, and look at the real numbers rather than massaged ones, a different picture emerges: non farm payrolls actually increased by 457,000 in June, and private-sector payrolls increased by 715,000. But how could the unemployment rate rise if there were more jobs? Because with recovery in the air, even more people went out looking for work—a phenomenon the media somehow missed.

■ After the Supreme Court reaffirmed *Roe* v. *Wade*, the *New*

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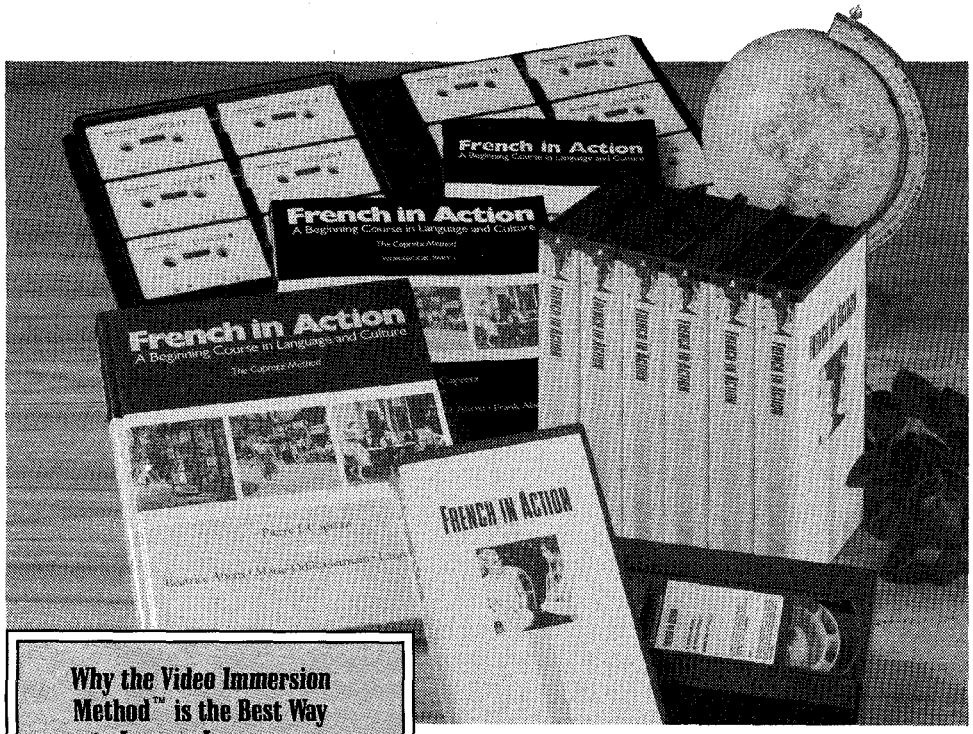
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York Times honored the drafter of the plurality opinion, David Souter, with a lavish front-page profile. Souter was hailed for "growing" as a Justice, and was credited with believing both in the "stability" of law and in a Constitution that can "evolve." In fact Souter has a past connection with abortion that puts his decision in a different light. In 1973, as a trustee of Concord Hospital, he voted to allow abortions to be performed although the hospital was under no obligation to lend its facilities to abortionists. Later he was an overseer of the Dartmouth Medical School for several years during which its affiliated hospital countenanced abortions as late as the end of the second trimester. These facts were called to the attention of the Senate Judiciary Committee by Howard Phillips of the Conservative Caucus during Souter's confirmation hearings, but nobody paid much attention and the laudatory *Times* profile says nothing of this background now. But it does at least call into question the idea that Souter has "grown."

■ The State of California, having spent its meager allowance of $45,000,000,000 and in need of another $11,000,000,000 and the use of the family car this weekend, is paying its workers and its bills with unbacked IOUs, which it calls warrants. These scraps of paper carry the full faith and credit of the rogues who got the state into this mess.

■ Iran has been discovered to be counterfeiting $100 bills of unusually good quality and peddling them around the world. Using modern printing technology purchased from the U.S. by the late Shah, the Iranians are circulating what may be the best-quality counterfeits ever produced. According to Senator Connie Mack and Representative Bill McCollum, the Syrians are helping in the distribution, through their drug and terrorist network. The weakening of the dollar's credibility as an international means of exchange is no laughing matter. But given the Administration's complaints about Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan's tight-fisted money-supply policy, has anyone looked into a possible Bush–Iran connection? The motive is obvious, the pattern familiar to all "October Surprise" buffs. We demand an Independent Counsel.

■ Come to think of it, Independent Counsels are no laughing matter either. The criminal trial of Clair George, formerly CIA's director of clandestine operations, is to begin soon in Washington. George, a 35-year CIA veteran with a distinguished record of service, is one of the brave ones who chose to plead not guilty and stand up to Lawrence Walsh. Contributions may be sent to: Legal Defense Fund, P. O. Box 309, Merrifield, Va. 22116.

■ It is becoming more and more obvious that the international Left, orphaned by the collapse of Soviet Communism, has found a refuge of sorts in the Green movement. Looking over the lists of "Non-Governmental Organizations" represented at June's "Earth Summit" in Rio, one finds the names of assorted Third World leftists who had not earlier been known for their expertise in climatology. A homegrown counterpart is Gareth Porter, who received respectful press attention in the *New York Times* and *Newsday* as head of an "independent research institute" on environmental policy. Porter last graced our political life as an antiwar activist who defended Pol Pot's regime in Cambodia against charges of genocide, which he denounced as Pentagon propaganda. Conservatives must pay attention to the ideological pedigree of self-styled environmentalists. The struggle over economic policy is heating up, even if the earth's atmosphere is not.

■ A lawyer who ignored the Hate Crimes Clause of the Constitution is in contempt of court in Florida for calling a prosecutor "little lady" and refusing to apologize. He got six months (probation), fifty hours of community service, and a fine when the little lady stamped her foot.

■ *Life is a comedy to those who think* . . . Consider those in San Antonio, Texas, who, unable to bear the thought of a middle school named for Jefferson Davis, substituted S. J. Davis, the name of a deceased black school trustee. And what does "S. J." stand for? Stonewall Jackson, the former trustee's wife informed the school's board. . . . Or the Mem-

■ Last issue's editorial item about Yitzhak Rabin's election victory in Israel was left somewhat muddled by an editing error. A key passage should have read: "He is likely to fuel the ongoing Israeli–Palestinian negotiations with new content, namely a more genuine willingness to share powers with an interim Palestinian self-governing authority in the occupied territories. He will freeze the building of Jewish settlements in the territories, at least those that serve no identifiable security purpose."

■ In an editorial [June 8] on the fetal-tissue bill, we incorrectly listed Senator Dan Coats as among those Republicans who joined the Democrats in defeating the Hatch amendment, which would have established a national tissue bank *not* based on abortion. Our apologies to Senator Coats.

■ We had to hold over to our next issue the article on Asian capitalism promised on our cover. We apologize to our readers.

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phis Literary Council, which "will need volunteers in August to teach an adult to read and help fight literacy in our community." . . . Or John W. Ryan, a 39-year-old computer programmer, who explains his support for abortion rights thus: "It would have been a tragedy if [my girlfriend] had been forced to have the baby. I personally feel queasy about it all, like it was our child." . . . *and a tragedy to those who feel.*

■ Ted Kennedy has married again, in a civil ceremony performed in his home, a circumstance necessitated because the Catholic Church would not annul his first marriage—at least not fast enough to suit him. And to think that some people used to worry that the Kennedys would be taking orders from the Pope.

■ A woman writes: "The women's Take Back Our Lives march on the opening day of the Democratic Convention was fun. We roared. We roared because there are still places a large number of Americans think women oughtn't to go. We roared because Jacqueline Ortiz was sodomized by her sergeant in Desert Storm. We attacked and reviled and taunted all the white men in the world—all the fathers, brothers, and husbands of nearly all the women in the crowd. We exonerated our individual abusers for the glorious sake of blaming their action on the system. We were fearless, we were feminist, and best of all . . . I had no problem seeing over the crowd."

■ Comedy Central, an all-comedy channel, will devote more time to the Democratic Convention than CBS, but still not enough.

Looking for Mr. Right

IF NATIONAL REVIEW were a Machiavelli to Ross Perot's Prince, our first piece of advice would be to dismiss us. Mr. Perot's distinctive appeal to the voters is that he is not a politician, and if he is to prosper, he must disdain the usual political devices in which advisors deal. Indeed, as Ben C. Toledano establishes in his article on page 32, Mr. Perot is seen by his supporters as the instrument of their revenge on a two-party establishment that has delivered them an uncomfortable present and a doubtful future. Other pundits have interpreted this as a rejection of the liberal and conservative philosophies which the Republican and Democratic Parties supposedly represent. All three presidential candidates are now maneuvering to reinvent themselves philosophically. Mr. Clinton is edging toward Moderation; Mr. Perot is devising a Third Way; and Mr. Bush is embracing a presidential Existentialism—he will run on his record.

What all these plans lack is a theory of the cause of the present discontents. Dismiss the liberal notion that voters are taking revenge because incomes have remained static or declined since the mid Seventies. Though sedulously fostered by the media, this myth aggregates a decline in incomes from 1977 to 1982 with a large sustained rise thereafter. There has admittedly been a modest decline during the present recession, aggravated and perhaps induced by the bipartisan tax hike of 1990. Even so, all income groups have enjoyed clear overall gains in the Republican years. Those who would argue otherwise must first recruit Jimmy Carter into the Republican Party.

Nor can foreign policy be distressing voters. Whatever the precise credit due to President Bush for America's victory in the cold war and current status as the world's sole superpower, few Americans are likely to be voting against either.

Some Americans are dissatisfied, gratifyingly so, with the Administration's pro-life commitment, and with its failure to endorse the unfinished progressive agenda on environmentalism, feminism, gay rights, multiculturalism, etc. If they are at all logical, they will vote in November for the Clinton–Gore ticket. As William McGurn demonstrates in his report from the Democratic Convention on page 16, the Democrats are now the party of the 1960s counterculture in what passes for their souls. Mr. Clinton's "moderation" on defense, welfare, and fiscal questions is merely window-dressing in an abortion clinic.

With the possible exception of environmentalism, however, most Americans are either hostile to, or uneasy with, the progressive agenda. Their discontent must be traced to what remains when that

Bill & Hillary & Al & Tipper

Hillary doesn't like Tipper;
  Tipper bakes cookies for Al.
Tipper's been censoring lyrics
  Boring as "Frivolous Sal."
Bill is aware of the friction;
  Hillary couldn't care less.
Al will be getting an earful,
  Which will be hell to finesse.

W. H. VON DREELE

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agenda, the economy, and foreign policy have been discounted: namely, education, welfare policy, affirmative action, law and order, immigration, bilingualism, and the rest. But those policies are the domain of liberaldom. Under both Ronald Reagan and George Bush, effective power to shape them was ceded to liberals in Congress, the courts, and the federal bureaucracy. They made policy—and the President either resisted or ratified it. Mr. Bush, seeking bipartisanship, was inclined to ratify.

So liberaldom and its results—the rise of illiteracy, illegitimacy, dependency, a racial spoils system, crime, and ethnic Balkanization—best explain the voters' revulsion against "the System." A sharp conservative attack on it, which people believed to be sincere, would win over most of them. Mr. Bush's 1988 campaign showed that. But because liberaldom can apparently depend on a bipartisan consensus *in extremis*—Mr. Bush's 1990 budget deal showed *that*—it looks like a permanent incubus as long as the two major parties alternate in power.

Hostility to liberaldom is thus transmuted, by a kind of Anti-Philosopher's Stone, into opposition to the two-party system.

The Anti-Philosopher, of course, is Ross Perot. As Hadley Arkes points out in his devastating article on page 24, Mr. Perot imagines that he could govern America easily enough by obtaining general agreement on the right policies and hiring the best people to carry them out. Yet in the presumably easier business of campaigning, he keeps having to apologize to people he has offended. No doubt he comforts himself with the thought that his general approach is right but his tactics tactless.

EXACTLY the opposite is the case. His tactics—candid, honest, brisk truth-telling without the politician's nervous covering of all the bases—are what people like about him. Where he errs is in lacking a consistent philosophy that would iron out his contradictory impulses and direct his thoughts. He begins by excluding gays from a Perot Administration and ends by endorsing the full "gay rights" agenda. The conservative insight that homosexuality should be quietly tolerated but not publicly affirmed would have saved him from both embarrassments. But he was presumably unaware of it.

In a liberal culture the man who is philosophically unanchored drifts toward liberalism. Unless Mr. Perot consciously embraces a conservative outlook, he will become little more than a tough-talking liberal and lose public support by degrees.

Mr. Bush, having undergone that precise experience, needs a strategy to reverse it. A negative campaign alone, denouncing the extremist liberalism of the Clinton–Gore ticket, will not win him the election. The world expects, and has discounted, that. Nor will a crude campaign proclaiming conservative themes and middle-class values in primary colors. Memories of the 1988 campaign would mock that approach. He is campaigning as a conservative, we would feel, in order to govern as a liberal. Mr. Bush has to persuade us that this time he really means it.

Mr. Bush must wage a conservative campaign of quiet intellectual persuasion. He must marshall evidence, lay out arguments, and draw conclusions from them. If he understands conservative arguments (as opposed to trumpeting conservative conclusions derived from nowhere in particular) there will be a presumption that he believes in them. To convert that presumption into a firm conviction, the President should meanwhile take ten domestic initiatives that do not need the approval of a hostile Congress. Blaming Congress for stalling the Bush agenda rings hollow when the President is perfectly free to take Executive actions that don't require the co-signature of either Tom Foley or George Mitchell.

1. Suspend the Davis–Bacon Act on (at least) an emergency basis in (at least) South-Central Los Angeles. Low-skilled residents would finally benefit directly from the influx of funding by being able to work on federal projects for wages below union scale.

2. Veto the Public Broadcasting Reauthorization bill, which increases funding for this public monopoly by 30 per cent. A huge funding increase in the face of a $400-billion deficit is indefensible, and a veto would remind voters that it's Congress that authorizes and appropriates tax dollars.

3. Re-issue President Reagan's Executive Order on the Family, which obliges Executive agencies to examine their policies to determine the effects on families. The order should be modified to move the compliance overview function from OMB to the Vice President's office.

4. Order the Department of Health and Human Services to eliminate federal subsidies to school-based health clinics. State health departments can decide if they want to foot the bill for condom distribution and abortion referrals.

5. Veto the Elementary and Secondary Education bill because it doesn't include private-school choice. The President's supporters don't want to wait till next year to see if the Administration is willing to fight for its new G.I. Bill for Kids.

6. Enforce the *Beck* decision by issuing final regulations immediately. Non-union employees are still being forced to subsidize union political activity with which they disagree, owing to foot-dragging at both the Department of Labor and the NLRB.

7. Issue an Executive order revoking the LBJ order that requires racial quotas in hiring for federal agencies. If we are to believe the President's insistence that he is opposed to racial quotas, he ought to eliminate them in his own workforce.

8. Enforce the Executive Order on Property Rights to compel Executive agencies to determine whether

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regulations they issue amount to a taking of private property. Agency heads should have to reduce their annual budget requests by the amount of any taking judgments their actions give rise to.

9. Propose a $500 child tax credit to lower the disproportionate share of taxes paid by families with children. Even Mr. Clinton is proposing a child tax credit. Here is one area where the President should be able to outbid a liberal Democrat.

10. Take the "no new taxes" pledge—once again. Only when he plainly acknowledges that the 1990 budget deal was a mistake, both politically and economically, can the President launch a credible attack on Perot and Clinton plans to raise taxes.

And only if Mr. Bush is willing today to defend private property and family values, cut taxes, and restrain federal spending, can he expect us to believe that he will do so over the next four years.

Getting to Know You

SENATOR AL GORE'S reputation as a "moderate" suggests that such media labels have more to do with haircuts than substance. Or maybe it means that a politician is no longer defined by his own words. If Gore's words mean anything, he is the most radical politician in the Senate.

In his book *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit* (reviewed here by Ronald Bailey, March 16), Gore writes that various threats to the environment are such that we must "change the very foundation of our civilization" to meet them. This will require a "wrenching transformation of society." He calls global warming "the most serious threat we have ever faced." But among serious scientists, there is no consensus that *any* global warming has occurred, let alone that it has been induced by, and can be counteracted by, human action.

To deconstruct: At a time when the megastate has fallen into disrepute, catastrophic environmentalism is just the ticket for renewing its mandate. Once again we are all in mortal danger, and only giving unprecedented power to the government can save us! As it happens, this accords nicely with Gore's general predilections. The National Taxpayers' Union rated him the biggest spender in Congress in 1989–90. The Competitive Enterprise Institute rated him the Senate's worst enemy of the free market (tied with Alan Cranston) in 1990.

Against this background, Gore's support for defense spending appears as support for big government rather than for national defense as such. He wavered on the Gulf War, voting for it only at the last minute. Yet that vote, together with his wife's opposition to dirty rock lyrics, has given him an unwarranted aura of conservatism.

Some of the aura may also be due to his former opposition to abortion. In 1987, when he was still voting against most abortion funding, he denounced "the outrageously large number of abortions which currently take place." In a form letter to constituents, he wrote: "During my 11 years in Congress, I have consistently opposed federal funding of abortions. In my opinion, it is wrong to spend federal funds *for what is arguably the taking of a human life.* Let me assure you that I share your belief that innocent human life must be protected, and I am committed to furthering this goal." (Emphasis added.)

In 1988 he even scolded Dick Gephardt, during their race for the Democratic nomination, for his flipflop on the issue: "I'm going to lay it on the line, Dick. The next President has to be someone who the people believe will stay with his convictions." Now that support for abortion has become the litmus test for Democratic office-holders, Gore supports even federal funding for abortion. Let us hope that his other "convictions" will prove equally disposable.

Yeltsin's Way

BORIS YELTSIN was better treated by his Western hosts at the G-7 economic summit in Munich than last year's mendicant in London, Mikhail Gorbachev was. And that's as it should be. Gorbachev was still leader of the Communist Party, presiding over a discredited socialist economy and coercive imperium. Yeltsin is attempting—by "shock therapy"—to bring free-market economics and democratic politics to his country. He left Munich with some concrete pledges of help.

The dark clouds continue to gather, however. Most disturbing is an analysis by the respected scholar Peter Reddaway in the *Washington Post*, seemingly based on inside sources, to the effect that the "shock therapy" has caused such dislocation and unrest in Russia that the strategy may soon be abandoned. Yeltsin is said to be contemplating a return to both authoritarian rule and reliance on state planning to effect a more gradual and orderly transition to economic reform. If so, we fear for the political consequences. We also consider it economically self-contradictory; since the entrenched state and Party bureaucracies are the most important *obstacle* to the private sector, they cannot possibly be the vehicle for its creation. Such a reversal would pose a moral dilemma for many Americans, who up to now

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have had the intellectually easy task of responding to a Russian policy that contained only good things: democracy, free-market economics, and a reduction of the military and foreign-policy challenge. What if the indicators become more mixed? What if repression at home were combined with a conciliatory policy abroad? We would no longer be able to evade thinking through our priorities.

NR believes that Russia's posture as a military threat and foreign-policy challenge ought to be our main concern. But the ending of economic reform and the restoration of bureaucracy at home would contain the seeds of future trouble in foreign policy. We should exert all our influence to persuade Mr. Yeltsin to maintain, even accelerate, privatization and price decontrol.

Who Knows Nothing?

WE COULD hardly expect America's most politically correct business magazine to acknowledge being beaten to the punch by NATIONAL REVIEW. But *Business Week*'s July 13 cover story, "The Immigrants: How They're Helping the U.S. Economy," is something special: a museum piece of claims and clichés already rendered obsolete by our own June 23 cover story, "Rethinking Immigration," by Peter Brimelow.

It's all there, from the hoary "nation of immigrants" line to the sidebar portraits of immigrant entrepreneurs. No consciousness, of course, of historical absurdity (as Brimelow pointed out, all nations are nations of immigrants) or of elementary fairness (portraits of Jamaican drug posses? Russian mobsters?). What the *Business Week* article does have, however, is a Harris poll showing that heavy majorities of Americans, white and black, think immigration is a bad thing and should be reduced. The magazine's reaction: nervous editorial throat-clearing about the danger that this sentiment will be exploited by "know-nothing bigots."

The principal author of the *Business Week* article, Michael J. Mandel, had already distinguished himself, as Brimelow pointed out, by reviewing Professor George Borjas's important book *Friends or Strangers* as if it were pro-immigration when in fact it demonstrated an alarming decline in immigrant skill levels. But here Mandel breaks new records in evasiveness. He cites another Borjas study to show that immigration does not affect wage levels, when it actually attributed as much as a third of the inflation-adjusted 1980s decline in high-school-dropout wages to immigration. He misstates Borjas's reason for worrying that recent Third World immigrants are joining the underclass (lack of skills, not discrimination). And he quotes Borjas to show that "only" 8.8 per cent of immigrant households were on welfare in 1980, compared to 7.9 per cent of native-born households—suppressing Borjas's point that the more recent immigrants are significantly more welfare-prone.

Mandel also manufacturers a myth we'll be hearing again: that immigrants pay $90 billion in taxes, but receive only $5 billion in welfare. He achieves this happy result by the simple expedient of omitting all other benefits that immigrants receive, notably education and health. Even *Business Week*'s editorialists realize this in their dim way—they call for federal subsidies for heavily immigrant school districts. (Borjas also calculates immigrants are a net loss to the welfare system. This time, Mandel ignores him.)

Naturally, the fact that the 1965 Immigration Act has significantly altered the U.S. ethnic balance is nowhere mentioned. Nor how Japan manages without any immigration at all. As the *Wall Street Journal* noted in its article about our cover story, a great debate on immigration is beginning. But on the evidence of *Business Week*, the real danger to America is not from potential "know-nothing bigots." It's from actual know-it-all bigots.

Down and Out in Munich

Kohl is counting pfennigs;
  Miyazawa's broke;
Mitterrand's mad farmers
  Hold him in a choke;
Yeltsin pried a billion
  From the IMF;
Bush inflamed his larynx
  Shouting at the deaf.

W. H. VON DREELE

NOTES & ASIDES

■ To the Editor
The Washington Post
Washington, D.C.

The review of William F. Buckley Jr.'s *WindFall* was not criticism but a kind of street crime, gratuitously violent, filled with envy and something like hatred. Buckley wrote a wonderful book about friendship, sailing, fatherhood, and getting on in years. Why did you publish such strange, disgraceful ranting about it?

Sincerely,
Lance Morrow
(Senior Editor, *Time* magazine)

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Dear Lance:

Many thanks for sending along your letter reproaching the *Washington Post* for the sick-unpleasant review of my *WindFall*. But if you want to see a *real* killer-review, have a load of this!

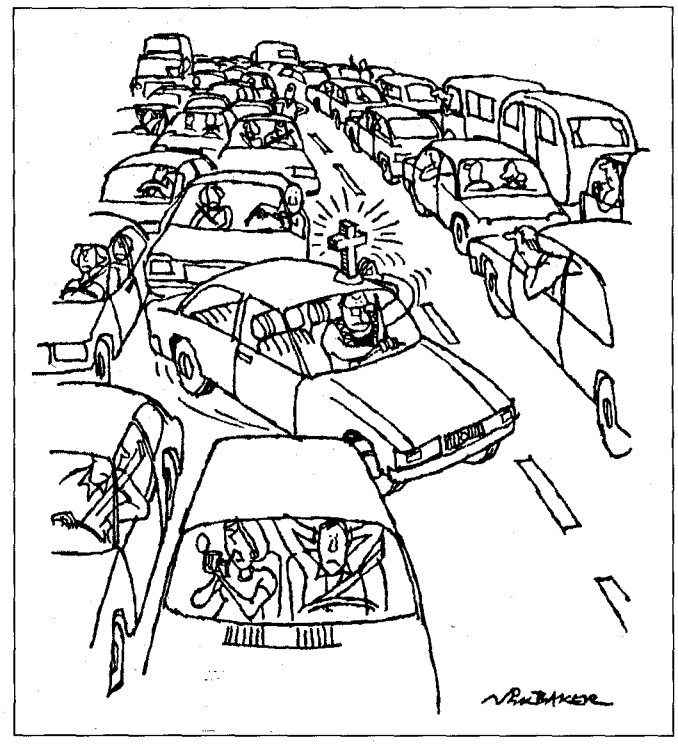
Planning to Read WindFall?

Mr. Buckley has written another of those autobiographical day-by-day books, if you can stand it, which I can't. The vehicle this time is a trans-Atlantic sailing trip (westbound) in which he does everything he can to liken himself to Christopher Columbus whom (come to think of it) he somewhat resembles, both gentlemen being vain, arrogant, and imperious. Those readers who have labored through his other sailing books (*Airborne*, *Atlantic High*, *Racing Through Paradise*) will recognize the usual sights and smells. Elaborate cuisine, a boatful of indentured servants/mates/captains, enough to keep Mr. Buckley out of serious trouble. (He goes through one storm which he all but likens to the 1938 hurricane, and after having done everything a good sailor shouldn't do, delivers a lecture at the end of the chapter about what he ought to have done about the storm, which ought to have included not to write about it.)

The book is an attempt to weave great meaning out of quotidian events. Thus his subtitle is "The End of the Affair." Ho ho, are we going to get from Buckley, the chauvinist Christian, some sort of an envoi to a departed mistress? Not at all; his "affair" has been with his magazine (NATIONAL REVIEW), which by everyone's reckoning has vastly improved since his departure as Editor-in-Chief; with ocean crossing (this is his fourth voyage, hence Ocean Four); and with his son, who to the evident surprise of Mr. Buckley actually outgrew, at something like age 35, filial servitude to the Mahster.

One hopes, reading along, to find safe passage from the overweening concern of the author with himself. One is best off abandoning hope at the beginning of "Book One," since in that way one can shield oneself from frustration. Mr. Buckley is bedeviled (mot juste?—as he might put it?) by himself. Whatever concerns him, he is determined to inflict upon his audience. Do you care how close Altair and Vega are together, in degrees and minutes measured from the horizon, in mid November? Well, you had better care, because if you do not, you are going to be wasting more time than most people have available to read trivial books.

Or—this is my favorite in Mr. Buckley's inventory of effronteries—are you interested in how he prepared in his youth for his hilariously unsuccessful avocation as an amateur musician? Well there are pages and *pages* on this subject, including detailed accounts of several appearances with symphony orchestras evidently broke enough to bring him in for



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benefit concerts, satisfied that Mr. Buckley will attract idolatrous crowds, which he will, except if there happens to be among them anyone who knows anything about music. Well, we go through a Q&A previously published in the *New York Times* about why he consented to play with the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra in 1989, which is inexplicable enough, alongside which the only thing more inexplicable is his evident conviction that his reasons are of public interest.

The first of the three "books" is simply a compilation of material Mr. Buckley has placed in yacht journals over recent years. They have in common only that the author is the hero in every situation, ranging from the decision to shut down one engine on a power yacht so that he can be heard more easily by his guests, to his decision to settle for smaller and smaller boats as the years go by. At this point one wishes he would settle for a boat he could blow about in his bathtub, the trouble being that he would almost certainly write a book about it: *Ocean Five: The Art of Traversing a Truly Large Bathtub in a Tiny, Frail Boat*, by Horatio Selfhornblower Buckley.

Pretty tough stuff, no? But rather witty in its savagery, I like to think—since I composed the above review, as a lark, one year ago, and sent it to my editor as warning that this is the direction The Enemy would take! . . . Am happy to report the readers of the book are more enthusiastic than over any other book I've ever written.

Most cordial regards,
Bill

—WFB

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ON THE SCENE

The Democrats' Albatross

WILLIAM McGURN

Fred Carlson

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

NEVER having covered the nomination of a presidential candidate, I arrive here several hours too early for the opening gavel of the 1992 Democratic Convention. It's a dog of a day, and the AIDS march won't be getting under way until well after 3 P.M. So I ring my father for lunch; his office is just around the corner from the Garden.

Usually when I visit my father's office I have to sidestep a gaggle of crackheads, prostitutes, and other assorted malefactors. Today they are nowhere in sight, having been moved out by Mayor David Dinkins. With them gone, you can see that this might even make a decent neighborhood. But no one believes for a moment it will last past the end of the week.

I mention this because it is such a perfect metaphor for the state of the Democratic Party. This convention is supposed to herald a new, improved party, with an all-Southern, baby-boomer ticket representing the triumph of the moderate Democratic Leadership Council. They've even put on their Sunday best for the platform—it talks about personal responsibility, faith, and family—and I remember this is the party that stood for my grandfather at a time when he regularly passed signs reading NO IRISH NEED APPLY.

And then I am jolted out of my reveries by the first words out of the mouth of the convention chairman, the governor of Texas. "My name is Ann Richards," she announces in an intentionally no-nonsense voice. "And I am pro-choice and I vote." This elicits thunderous cheers from the delegates, many of whom sport buttons from the National Abortion Rights Action League. It turns out to be the one guaranteed applause line this week.

Among the handful of delegates who do not share the party's enthusiasm here is the Democratic governor of Pennsylvania, Robert Casey. He knows that when the party says pro-choice it doesn't mean simply that it wants abortion to remain legal. What it means is that it will not tolerate a single restriction on abortion on demand, and it even calls for taxpayer money to be make sure no abortion anywhere goes undone.

"Abortion is a defining issue in politics; in fact, it may be *the* defining issue," says Casey, a tall, lean man sporting a red button reading, I'M A PRO-LIFE DEMOCRAT AND I WANT MY PARTY BACK. "What does it say, for example, when we can't even come out in favor of parental notification for teenagers? It says that the last person a child should talk to about such a momentous decision is her parents, when they should be the first people she talks to." An unregenerate liberal in policy matters, Casey understands that Americans may not want abortion but they think there is something seriously wrong about 1.7 million abortions a year. They want some restrictions, and they wonder about a Democratic Party that can't bring itself to say even this much.

The reason is that abortion on demand is a lodestar for a host of other issues. Strong families? This means your 12-year-old daughter can get an abortion without your knowing about it. Traditional values? Free condoms in the schools, but no prayers. Personal responsibility? Well, when the Congress appropriated money for teen chastity programs—a pittance compared to the money allotted to contraception—Pat Schroeder pulled out all the stops to try to kill it. Even Democrats who may not themselves be this extreme are inexorably pulled by the party logic: both Clinton and Gore, who earlier supported some restrictions on abortion, have endorsed the Freedom of Choice Act now being pushed by NARAL. Voters aren't stupid, even if Democratic politicians are, and they recognize that abortion on demand is an entire culture and not just a political position.

Indeed, this year's abortion provision is even more radical than past years', because it includes support both for a Freedom of Choice constitutional amendment that would rule out any state regulation and for a national health-care proposal that would fund abortions. "The national Democrats think they can override the values and concerns of the American people with some middle-class economics proposals," says Casey, referring to the concessions made to the DLC on economic and defense programs. "But that is a false hope because people vote on values, not policy issues."

And for all the talk about "choice," there is little time for opposing views. When Casey wrote to DNC chief Ron Brown asking for permission to address the convention, he got no an-

Mr. McGurn is NR*'s Washington Bureau Chief.*

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swer. The same happened when he petitioned Chairman Ann Richards. In the end, he was given a copy of a letter from the party's legal counsel to the convention's parliamentarian full of legalistic mumbo-jumbo about why the rules don't permit it. This in a convention that did permit Jesse Jackson, two AIDS victims, a colorguard of homeless veterans, and entertainer Mac Davis, who announced to a startled audience that people were "starving to death" in America.

It's also a convention whose rules permitted the appearance of six pro-choice *Republican* women. To ensure the insult was received, the one who spoke, Kathy Taylor, not only came from Pennsylvania, she'd worked on the campaign of Casey's GOP opponent. During the abortionfest that followed, as NARAL's Kate Michelman linked arms with Chairman Ron Brown and Pat Schroeder, delegates on the floor waved signs that read LESBIAN RIGHTS—not even gay rights. So accepted has the culture become that no one even yawned when the editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, Shelby Coffey III, the publisher of the *New York Times*, Arthur Sulzberger Jr., and the president of CNN, Thomas Johnson Jr., co-chaired a reception sponsored by the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association (sporting T-shirts saying "We're Here! We're Queer! We're on Deadline!").

So committed is the party to its abortion albatross that people of more moderate blood have but two choices: move decisively left or be shut out altogether. Pro-choice Representative Lee Hamilton (D., Ind.) was nixed as running-mate because he supports restrictions like parental consent. Al Gore took the other path. Early in his career, Gore had a near-perfect pro-life record, and even when he moved to the pro-choice camp he opposed federal funding, telling one constituent in a 1987 letter that abortion was "arguably the taking of a human life." Meanwhile, Tipper Gore incurred the wrath of the recording industry because she campaigned against sexually suggestive lyrics. Today, candidate Gore has jettisoned opposition to federal funding and you don't hear the Mrs. talking about dirty lyrics. The culture always wins out, even if it means losing in November.

It doesn't hurt to have the press. Although the *New York Times* had some ten reporters covering the convention full-time, the *New York Daily News* twenty, the *New York Post* twenty, and *Newsday* forty, Governor Casey's press conference got only one teensy paragraph in the *Times* and a small box buried in *Newsday*. ABC, CBS, and NBC didn't mention it at all. Try to remember this when the Republicans meet next month in Houston for their convention. You can bet that the same folks who didn't think dissent by a twice-elected governor of a crucial state worth a story will splash Ann Stone of Republicans for Choice all over their front pages and television screens.

Even Bill Clinton worries about the image projected. At a meeting of the Congressional Women's Caucus, he tried to argue that pro-choice did not mean pro-abortion—a distinction lost on this single-issue convention. "This is a pro-choice party and a feminist convention," says political analyst Michael Barone. "Feminism gives you lots of energy that can see you scaling new heights. But it can also drive you off a cliff—and these people don't know where the cliff is." □

Everything Is Changing

MARY McSHERRY

NEW DELHI

IN NEW DELHI today, the words "new" and "change" and "different" fill a visitor's ears. Socialism, formerly the favorite noun of Indian politicians, has been replaced by "supply-side," "market economy," and "job training." "It is a new day," says Venkat Narayan, India's foremost political journalist. "There is optimism in the air. Change is everywhere."

Perhaps not everywhere. Delhi's traffic is still anarchic, the road's center stripe apparently only for decoration. Three-wheeler cabs, buses, cars, bicycles, taxis, whole families on single moter scooters swoop competitively at and around and almost through each other. Road-side contrasts still seize the eye: white-pillared mansions and squatters' shacks; gardens packed with blooms and brick-hard, dust-exuding bare earth. And still and always there is the constant stream of people, people, people. In dhotis, in longhis, in Western dress, in saris, in shawls, in shirts and baggy Punjabi pants—always people, the constant visible reminder that India's population, nearly four times that of America, is crowded into one-third the space and that half those millions live in poverty.

These basics have not changed. Still, in India it *is* a new day, which dawned abruptly in the summer of 1991. First, Rajiv Gandhi—sometime prime minister and leader of India's largest party, the Congress Party—was assassinated. His death meant the end of the Nehruvian dynasty which ever since Independence in 1947 had been *the* political force in the country, almost a royal family.

Rajiv's death was quickly followed by that of the Soviet Union, the country that had been India's chief international ally. Suddenly India needed both a new leader and new friends.

At this critical moment the Congress Party chose seventy-year-old V. P. Narasimha Rao. Rao's selection was not one of rocket-firing enthusiasm. The post was expected to go to one of three younger men—Arjun Singh, a savvy Congress stalwart; Mahdav Rao Scindia, the Harvard-trained son of a princely house ("Rajiv with brains," in one journalist's phrase); or Sharad Pawar, renowned for his in-fighting abilities. Each had strong supporters—so strong that no one of the three could sweep the party. Rao appeared the perfect compromise. A speaker of eight languages, he was a gentle, unassuming, scholarly man, an *old* man—seventy is a great deal older in India than in the West. No one need fear that he would hold ambitions for a second five-year term. Or so it was thought. Although Rao had intended to return to his home village and spend his retirement years writing poetry, now that he was India's leader, he meant to lead. He was mightily assisted by a circumstance not generally regarded as helpful: the government was nearly bankrupt. In June of 1991 the Indian treasury held only enough hard currency for two weeks' im-

Miss McSherry is a veteran foreign correspondent.

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ports—and without key imports India could not run.

With this persuasive proof that India needed to change her ways, Rao appointed Arjun Singh, Madhav Rao Scindia, and Sharad Pawar to important cabinet posts. But for the most important, minister of finance, he chose Manmohan Singh, an economist, not a politician, the former head of the Reserve Bank of India.

Rao's dramatic first action was to have Singh announce the near emptiness of the treasury and ship gold to Britain to pawn. This done, again through Singh, Rao sought loans from the World Bank and the IMF. At the same time, skillful ambassadors like Abid Hussain in Washington spread the word that India now saw her role as a partner of the West, and that she wished to ease the way for foreign investors. There was, for example, no reason why a Western firm should not own the controlling share of a project. The compass was being reset.

Du Pont and Ford and General Motors and Corning Glass and Kellogg and Coca-Cola and Pepsi—an impressive list, yet: "Foreign investment has not yet picked up as it should." The speaker is Arjun Singh, minister for human resources. "Our infrastructure is good, and there is abundant cheap labor here—*trained* manpower. Technical *experts*—men who'd command a hundred dollars an hour in the U.S.—here get twenty-five to fifty!"

"We have already lifted regulations, almost across the board. Except for 18 core industries, all others have been de-controlled." Harvard-trained Minister for Commerce P. Chidambaram has the task of unraveling the accumulation of years of socialism: government ownership and management; endless filling of forms, endless opportunities for corruption.

Besides regulations, Chidambaram's task includes reducing the punitively high import duties. "The highest are down to 110 per cent from 150. Capital goods are 60 per cent instead of 80. I would like to see duties much lower, but"—a sharp look—"do you know how much of India's total income is derived from import taxes? *Forty* per cent!" Sardonically: "If they are cut more now, then Dr. Manmohan Singh's budget will not balance."

For that and other reasons, foreign investors are adopting a wait-and-see attitude. Richard Houghton of Corning is full of praise for Corning's Indian partner in a joint venture, but when asked about Corning's next venture, he sidesteps with a grin. "Hey—take it easy. Give us a chance to see how this plant in Rajastan goes."

Inderjit Gupta, longtime head of the Communist Party, weighs the topic of foreign investment morosely. A man in his sixties, stocky, sturdy, he says: "We are worried about how this new program will affect the poor. I don't know of any country with a market economy that does not have unemployment and inflation. And look what is happening already—" He is referring to secessionist activity in Kashmir, in Assam, in the Punjab. "This is *real*!"

There is no questioning the reality as one approaches the home of Kush-

Chang Park

want Singh. At the gate stands an open-bodied police truck, in and beside it uniformed men with rifles. At the front door, behind a barricade of sandbags, another rifle bearer demands identification. The prize-winning Sikh novelist is being protected from Sikh militants. But why does a man who returned the government's highest award to protest the army's invasion of the Sikh Golden Temple need protection from Sikhs?

"In '84 when Bhindranwale was stockpiling arms in the Golden Temple, I said he was insane." A shrug. "He *was*. So I got on his hit list. He was killed, but his followers—" Another shrug. "But there are more interesting things to talk about. Rao's new government . . . It is a great thing for this country to have a prime minister chosen for his competence, not his family . . ."

But there is something about conducting an interview inside a fortress that narrows the focus to one national issue. The Punjab, land of the Green Revolution (70 to 80 per cent of the country's grain is grown there), now has another revolution: bands of turbaned youths gunning down those opposed to independent Khalistan—seventeen dead in that bazaar, three down that back lane; a few at a time but in nine years totaling thousands.

"It will pass," says Singh. "Most Sikhs are not for secession, so it will pass. And it is not India's biggest problem. That is population. So many people. So many *poor*."

Archbishop Antonio Fernandes—tall, imposing—nods. "Gandhi said we should go down to the poor and rise with them. We have done the opposite. We have 110,000,000 rich, and seven-eighths of the population is poor. We are *choking* with affluence, and nobody listens to the voices of the poor."

Former Prime Minister V. P. Singh, quietly contradicts that indictment. "My government said we must consider those who have not been considered. But then—we were not long in power." Not long at all—only ten months. A former member of the Congress Party, Singh had formed a coalition party, the National Front, that bested Rajiv Gandhi and swept into office in 1989 with the promise of putting into effect what in America would be called affirmative action. Singh planned to open to those known as "unscheduled classes" (the word "caste" is officially taboo) more than half the government posts.

He was met by an upper-class eruption. University students, even younger well-born boys, fearing themselves cheated out of their chances, exploded into action. They burned buses, trains, even, in ultimate protest, themselves. Singh's government fell.

"Still," he says, "we made people aware. We said, 'There *must* be jobs for the poor.' Jobs and education, that is the only hope for India."

Ashok Walia, slender, thoughtful, the owner of a thriving advertising agency, muses aloud: "There are so many people who have nowhere to turn—people living maybe six, eight in one room. Even to build on a little more space, that costs money. What our Rotary Club has done, we have adopted a village. We see to it that the children have clothes for school, for

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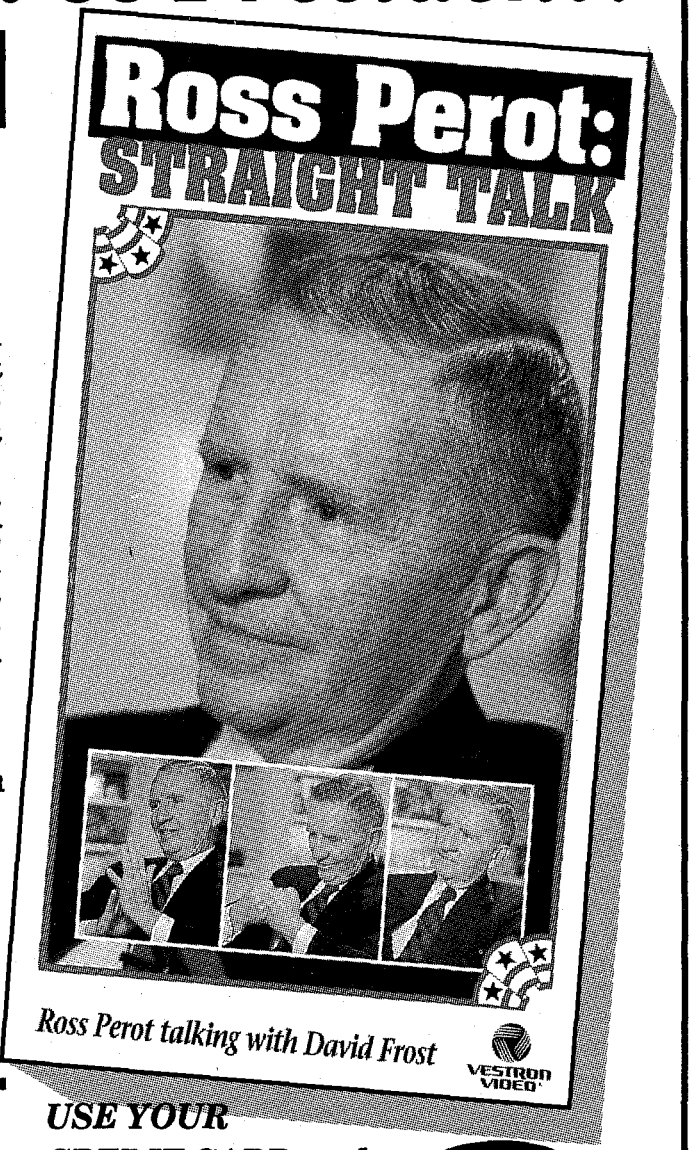

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books. If a man has a problem—his wife is ill, his daughter is to be married—he comes to us; we help. He is no longer without hope.

In the Lok Sabha, India's House of Representatives, Manmohan Singh stands by his desk presenting his budget. Two of Singh's basic points—that public-sector enterprises need to show a profit and that the first priority has to be the national economy rather than the short-term well-being of the poor—send left-wing members leaping to their feet. The whole budget, they claim, has been dictated by the World Bank, the IMF. Manmohan Singh has traded India's sovereignty for loans. Singh mildly denies the accusations, but a mannerly voice does little to combat the outburst. More men and women leap to their feet. And more. And more. In his front-row seat, the prime minister looks on, half laughing, as the cacophony builds to a climax. Finally, the members start sitting down. As if never interrupted, Singh explains that the World Bank approves of but did not dictate his budget and adds, "And we now have money—money that was urgently needed."

"But *why* so urgently needed?" The speaker is an Indian businesswoman, slender, stately, young. In her soft patterned sari, she does not look like someone who understands ledgers, but the conferences she manages brought half a million dollars' worth of hard currency into India last year. "*How* can a government all of a sudden find that the treasury is empty?"

V. P. Singh had been finance minister under Rajiv Gandhi. Had he been surprised? Smiling, he shakes his head. "In '86 I had taken all the figures—money supply, revenue deficit, growth, daily expenditures—and made a forward projection. There was no escaping what it said. There had been macro-mismanagement in the Eighties. I took it in to Rajiv. I wanted to take it to Parliament, but, oh no, I mustn't do that! That could destroy the faith of the people in the government. And then"—a rueful smile—"in one month I was no longer minister for finance."

And during his own prime-ministership? "We cut the deficit. There are ways to trim the budget without turning the economy upside down. Instead, what does the present government do? It says, 'We will bring in foreign investors, and this will save the economy.' But will it? Oh yes, some foreign investments are all right—for gas exploration, say, or oil refining. There is no local industry for that, so it is not interfering with anyone. But what about"—a quick smile—"popcorn? Say you come to India; you are going to manufacture popcorn. For export? No, you are going to sell it right here. Plenty of people to eat your popcorn. But they are *already* eating popcorn. Little local manufacturers make it, and local people are buying it. But you can produce popcorn that pops bigger. You will advertise it. Your popcorn will win over the customers of the local men—and then what happens to them? What happens to the people who work for them?"

V. P. SINGH'S popcorn manufacturer is hypothetical, but Kellogg is real, and soon, Kellogg's Garrick D'Silva says, Indians will find Kellogg's Corn Flakes on their grocery shelves. "The trouble with the corn flakes you can buy here now," D'Silva explains, "is that the local plants mostly make them out of the grain residue left over from the manufacture of beer. And their machinery is probably forty years old. Ours will be the newest available and—"

And what will happen to the local manufacturers? What will happen to the public-sector industries that have already proved uncompetitive? The question is one for Arjun Singh.

"They must do better."

And if they do not?

"Then they go under."

And their employees?

"They will have to find another job. Perhaps they will have to join a job-training program."

"Moonshine!" explodes Inderjit Gupta. "*What* other job? *What* job-training program? They do not exist. In a population the size of ours—"

"And fifty thousand more born each day," points out Venkat Narayan. "You read: seventeen killed by terrorists. *Seventeen*—what the hell! I don't say it's *right*. I'm not *for* it, but seventeen people—two thousand have been born just while we've been talking. You in the West must realize, you need a different yardstick here. Yes, there are *so* many people, *so* much poverty, *so* much illiteracy, but also there is so much warmth, so much love, so much life—just look around!"

"We are urging visitors," says the young minister for tourism, Mahdav Rao Scindia, "get out of Delhi, see the country. We want everyone to know: India is a friendly country."

It is also a very big country, and away from Delhi's trees and gardens, it is very dusty and very hot. The 160 miles to Chandigarh, capital of the Punjab, can take six, seven hours by bus or car. By train it is faster, but most of India is not accessible by train. Most of the country lies down narrow, bumpy roads overburdened with buses, trucks, buffalo carts, pedicabs, tractors, with all traffic held to the speed of the slowest mover. To make a trip in the Punjab you set out at four or five in the morning, not only because of the mid-day heat, but in order to reach your destination before the terrorists start work.

You go down roads with fields on both sides: grain, sugar cane, bright, blooming mustard. The famine days are over. India is exporting food now. "India has *every* climate zone." In memory you hear the voice of P. Chidambaram. "We can raise anything. We could feed the world!"

Someday, maybe. For now, men and women labor in the fields, digging, harvesting by hand. Buffalo carts piled high with knife-slashed sugar cane make their slow, deliberate way to the sugar factories. Your car creeps past the mud villages with their piles of dung sculpted into small architectural wonders—domes with dung cakes used like shingles so rain is shed and the winter's fuel is saved.

Later it creeps even more slowly through a small town, past Kiplingesque roadside tea stands; past hand-cart after hand-cart of bananas freckling in the sun, with dogs scrounging around, and monkeys peering down from roofs; past a sign over one doorway: *Typewriter Institute. Thesis Our Specialty*. Something new? Or an echo of Sanscrit scholarship four thousand years old?

Another day, in the twilit courtyard of what had been a maharajah's summer palace, a crowd is gathered around an old man, bearded, barefoot, declaiming. "He is saying," a friend whispers, " 'Everything is new. Everything is old. Everything is changing. Nothing changes.' " It is a long way from ministerial offices, but the old man has had the last word. □

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"HOME NOW IS THE SAILOR, HOME FROM THE SEA..."

WindFall is the *summa* we have been waiting for. This is what Buckley saw on his watch."
— Daniel Patrick Moynihan

Ronald Reagan
"An eloquent, high-spirited, irresistible voyage into the later passages of life...also a much more personal Bill Buckley than we have ever seen before."

P.J. O'Rourke
"A personal, spiritual, and occupational summation... a glimpse into the soul of a very remarkable man."

D. Keith Mano
"If this book is about sailing, then *The Old Man and the Sea* is about marlin bait."

Louis Auchincloss
"I can think of no more exhilarating reading for the years celebrating Columbus's first voyage than this renavigation in a sailing ketch by that most dedicated and refined of epicureans, Bill Buckley, with his brave and witty crew."

Charlton Heston
"He's run a magazine and for mayor, written novels and commentary, played the harpsichord and Moses to modern conservatism, while keeping a proper perspective between God and country, friends and family....The latest of his wonderfully readable sea sagas...also the best."

Alistair Horne
"I have known Bill for precisely half a century. I recognize him as being capable of giving out more love and friendship than any other man alive...what *WindFall*, basically, is all about."

The climax of William F. Buckley's classic quartet.

WindFall
The End of the Affair

William F. Buckley, Jr.

With photographs by Christopher Little

RANDOM HOUSE

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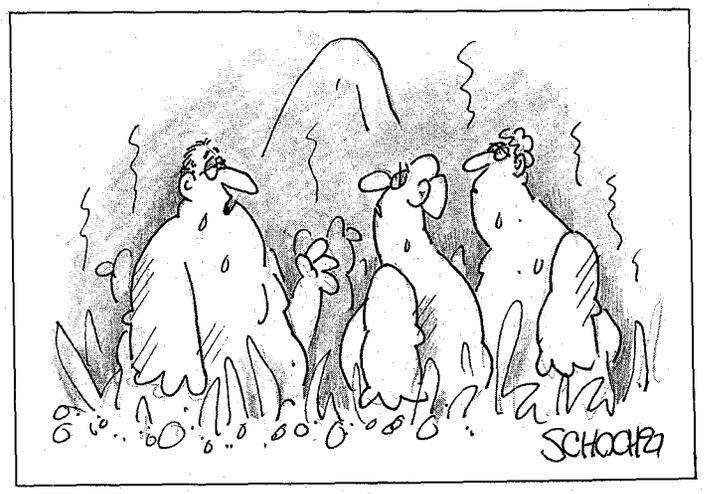
help

For Mr. Bush's Handlers

Put him on with Oprah;
  Larry King has space.
Donahue would take him
  As a change of pace.
Anyway, don't stand there:
  Move the guy around!
Otherwise, you'll find him
  In the Lost and Found.

W. H. VON DREELE



"Flashing my brights on and off to slower moving vehicles in front of me. . . . And you?"

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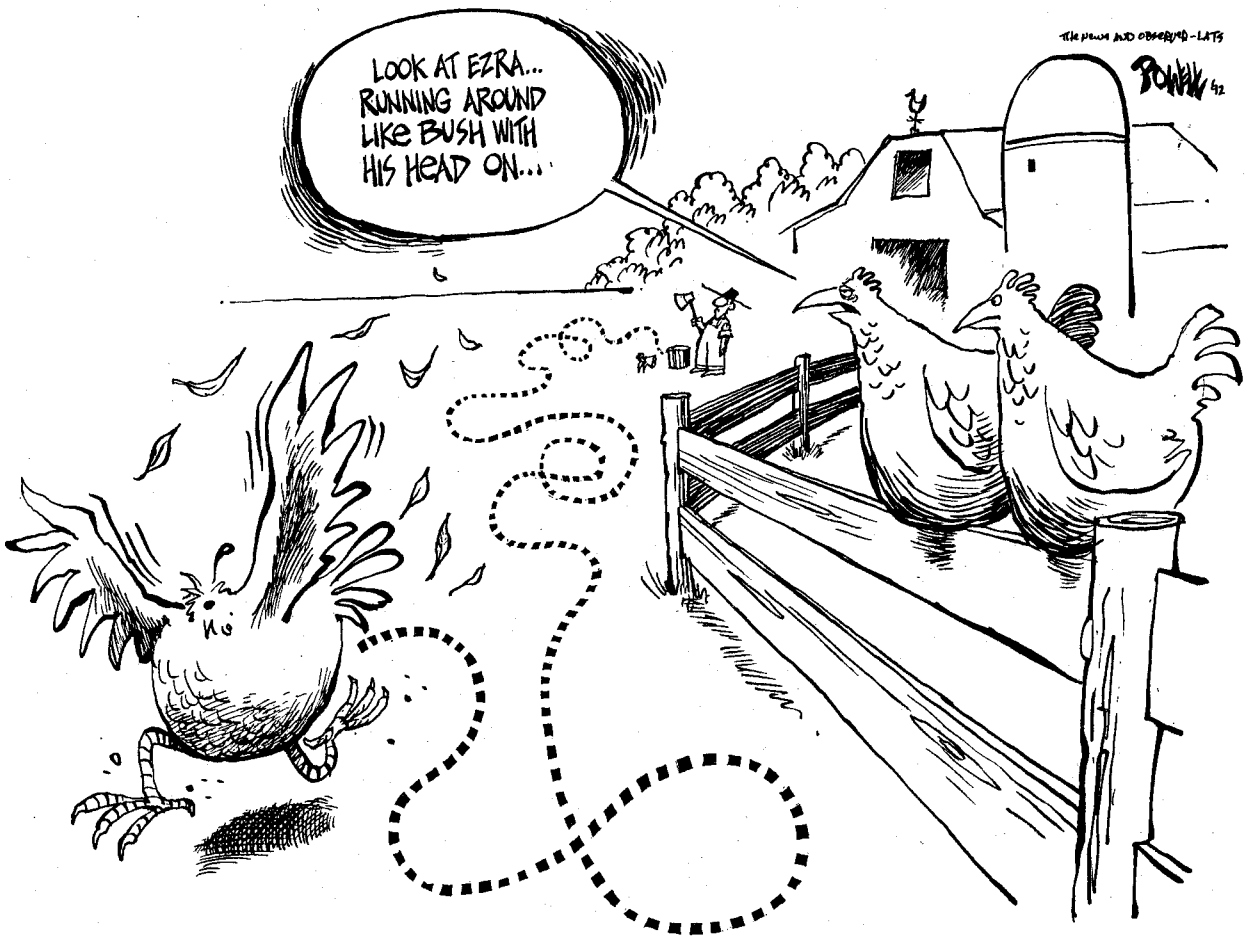

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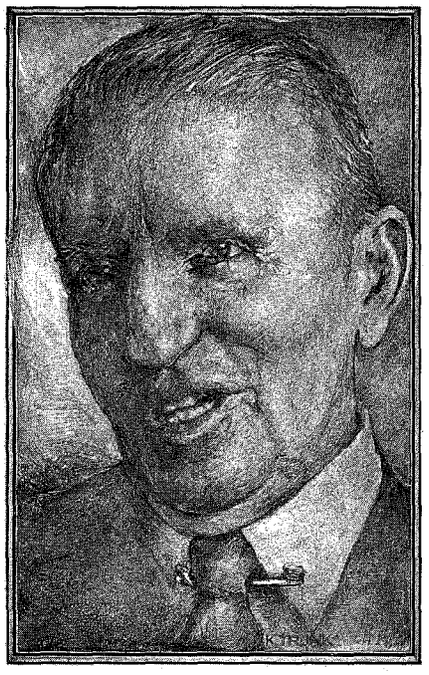

Meet Ross Perot

THE MAN FROM NOWHERE

Ross Perot is the man who knows his business,
the man without encumbering alliances.
That is a large part of his appeal;
how might it work in the business of governing?

HADLEY ARKES

COME on, admit it: he can be a fetching guy—short, feisty, emitting sparks, with laughing eyes; canny, focused, nobody's fool. The language is crisp; the figures are memorable. He reminds me of a certain senator, years ago, from a border state, who would see the trap in his adversary's scheme, and exclaim, "There's the razor in the soup!" And in the case of Ross Perot, that sort of language, oddly aimed, often hits the target. Perot on the state of our politics: "The message . . . coming from both parties . . . [is] 'Can we buy your votes with your money this year?' " Is that not a fair distillation at least of the corrupted version of our politics, in the modern welfare state?

Perot on presidential debates: "[W]e're not talking about debates where newscasters ask you a question. We're talking about the old college debate . . . I would not have any interest at all in one of these, you know, blow-dried guys sitting there asking all three of us questions in a pompous way." Is that not exactly right? Is that not what a debate is really meant to be?—not candidates responding to a disjointed series of questions from celebrities of the media; but speakers compelled to fashion a design for their arguments, and along the way, perhaps, finding the reason they are running?

Incentives and capital gains: "[N]ow, see, everybody gets turned off by the term capital gains. A lot of folks don't even know what it means. I'm not going to call it capital gains. I'm going to call it putting risky money into your little business. If that money goes into the treasury of your company, and is used to build your company and create jobs, that's high-risk money." (Interview with Larry King, February 20.) Might Perot be packaging here, in his homespun way, the proposal that George Bush has persistently failed to make compelling to the public and the Congress? Could Perot, with his folksiness, finally make the Dems too embarrassed to engage in their usual postures over the "fairness" of cutting taxes for the rich?

A Razor in the Broth

AND YET, there is a razor in this spicy broth. Buying the votes of voters with their own money is the operating style of a government that is in a position to deliver ever more benefits to people because it exercises ever more leverage in their lives. Perot would not break that cast of operation; he would enlarge it. What he would seek to break, as he says, is the "adversarial relationship" between government and business—which is to say, he would have the government intervene even more actively and minutely in "fixing" the economy. Precisely what needs to be "fixed" is a matter both various and elusive, but it evidently needs a style of "managing" that is direct, hands-on, and animated by no small plans. For Perot, the project involves nothing less than the "re-industrialization" of America, a dramatic change in the structure of production and of relations between workers and their companies. This is not a recipe, as Marx would say, for cheap government.

In a speech to the National Press Club (March 18), Perot said, "Watch my lips—you're going to have to double [taxes]" on personal income in order to avoid a deficit this year. Some crafty men convey unwelcome news in a bantering way. Perot embellishes, and speaks

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in hyperbole. But it would be risky to assume that he speaks inadvertently, or that the notions he casts out in throwaway lines are not to be taken seriously.

Big Bites

IT MARKS a certain spirit and good sense on the part of Perot to insist on the kind of discourse that moves beyond nine-second "sound bites." The television stations have responded by giving him as much time as he craves. In fact, he seems to be on television more than Dan Rather, and with far longer strings of narrative. He also admits to writing his speeches himself, and so these large samples of Perot's commentary may be taken as authentic reflections of his state of mind. But in that event, even Perot should find the results quite sobering, if he takes the trouble to view the tapes. For whether he speaks in segments of five minutes or ninety, the curious fact is that he still speaks mainly in sound bites. They may be strung together to form longer chains, but they are still no more than homely zingers, testy jabs. They form no argument or exposition; nor do they mark off, for his listeners, the paths of reason that guide him to his conclusions.

Perot's transcripts contain a surprising sameness. The corporate leader who prizes, beyond all, the man who knows his business, shows a striking want of concreteness when he is asked to concentrate his colorful wit on any particular case. When he was asked, for example, about Jerry Brown's proposal for a flat tax of 13 per cent, Perot remarked, candidly, that he had not been able to study that proposal ("I've been preoccupied"), but he had rather emphatic opinions on the larger project of designing a whole new system. "[B]uilding a new tax system," said Perot, "is much easier than most other things because it's numbers. And you can analyze it, and you can model it, and then—actually, in a month or two you could come back with all kinds of options to the American people." But what would be the shape of that new system? What would be its leading principles? This, said Perot, is how one would go about it:

> [S]tart with a blank sheet of paper. Say, number one, it's got to be fair. Now there's a new word on taxes. Number two, it's got to raise the revenues. And number three, let's make it as paperless as we can.
>
> Then, run all the different models, go back to the town hall, explain it to the American people, and say okay, here are our recommendations. [Interview with Larry King, April 16.]

And that, as we say, is that. Of course, the question might have been too broad, or this might not have been the time to descend into the principles of a new code. But if Perot had any novel understandings of justice to bring to the tax code, he might have been willing to intimate just one or two of them on this occasion.

Still, it might be fairer to consider a more confined question, perhaps a problem with which Perot himself has had direct experience. How about General Motors? Perot had served on its board until he inspired the most intense interest, on the part of the company, in buying out his shares at a hefty price. For Perot, GM had become the very model of what was wrong with American industry: too many layers of management, too distant from the operations and concerns of workers, and too distant from its own customers. Perot was asked what he would have had done differently. As with "[a]nything you want to ask a question about," said Perot, "let's go through the engineering process":

> Number one, take it to pieces. Number two, find the best system in the world that works, study it, take it to pieces. Number three, get the best people who know that industry. . . .
>
> Then put together several alternative plans. [And bring the choices once again to the American people on an electronic town hall.] [Remarks at the National Press Club, March 18.]

Do you begin to sense a momentum building? Once we catch on to this method of solving problems, many issues once regarded as intractable may be taken up in the lift of a new confidence. And in that spirit, Perot offered the same, fresh method as a means of finding peace and stability for the Middle East ("you put a world-class negotiating team over there"—interview with Larry King, April 16). But Perot began to reveal more of his worldly sense when the question turned to guns. Larry King had the impression that Perot was "pro gun control," but Perot quickly rejoined, "No. Now wait a minute." He was in favor of certain controls, but not for everyone. "When I was a boy in Texas," said Perot, "we all had guns but we didn't shoot one another. . . . The problem is to get the guns out of the hands of the violent people." King naturally wished to know just how Perot would identify those "violent people." Well, Perot explained, you start like this:

> Bring together law-enforcement officers, the district attorneys, the judges, National Rifle Association, all these different groups who I already know from conversation with them say, "Yes. We will go to the wall with you to get the guns out of the hands of violent people."
>
> Then we'll develop a plan to do that. Then we go through television through the Town Hall. We explain that to the American people. We build a consensus. We pass the laws and we move on [to] the next problem.

But in the sweep of this resolution, Perot had neglected to explain the first step in his plan. As King quickly reminded him: "How are you going to find violent person B"—the member of that sole class in this country whose members might lose their liberty to keep and bear arms? "Well," said Perot, "that's what I want to figure out with everybody that really knows. See, this is the way you solve problems."

Once may be an accident; twice may mark a disposition; but when the same response begins to settle into a pattern, carried over a range of cases, moving from the control of guns to the fixing of General Motors to the restoration of the American family, it seems to become the emblem of a cast of mind. And the mind is not exactly that of a Solomon or Solon, gifted with the genius of practical judgment. The state of mind reflected here comes closer to that parody offered by Mr. John Cleese in one of his sketches for the Monty Python troupe. Cleese portrayed a treacly television host dis-

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pensing upbeat advice to people for the ordering of their lives. In one of the skits, Cleese announced that people could dissolve many of the anxieties besetting them if they simply contrived to make a large amount of money. How to do this? Invent a product that everyone needed, and that everyone would be impelled to buy.

Seeking Light

PEROT'S ADVICE, affably tendered, has been no more illuminating. No question measures more dramatically for him the crisis of the country than the depth of the deficit and the charge it places on the next generation. But Perot has yet to explain just why the deficit would mark any graver crisis today than it did in the 1950s, when it claimed the same percentage of the Gross Domestic Product. Herbert Stein noted, in the *Wall Street Journal*, that the total budget deficit of the 1980s was around $1.1 trillion larger (in 1990 dollars) than the total deficit of the 1970s. By his calculations, the deficits of the 1980s might have retarded the growth of GDP by only about 3 per cent. "Is that," he asked, "what all the deficit-terror is about—that the GDP in 1990 was $5.5138 trillion when it would have been $5.6792 trillion if deficits had been kept to the 1970s level?"

Perot's haziness has been all the more curious given that he seems to respect, foremost, the man who is anchored in a knowledge of his subject. On that ground Perot seems to claim his own authority and offer himself to the public. But for a man so given to the authority of facts, he has been flippantly indifferent to facts when it comes to some of the gravest issues before us. Abortion stands as a notable case in point. For here is a question on which we might expect to see the way Perot engages his practical wit in bringing principles to bear on a body of evidence.

But Perot has been content simply to announce that the decision is "the woman's choice." Still, it is hard to imagine that Perot would respect a woman's "choice" to destroy any of the children now in her home. He must assume, then, that the child in the womb is not a "child" in the same way, with the same claim to the protection of the mother. Now what would be interesting for the public to know is the way he made that distinction: Does he think that there is any question about the species of the child in the womb? As a man of only about 5 feet 6 inches, he surely could not assume that we become more *human* as we become taller or heavier. Could he really be in the dark about the findings of embryology, and the genetic identity that marks our distinct being, even from the first moments? Or is he willing to install a more radical premise: that people should be free to decide for themselves just whom they will regard as a human being? It would be illuminating to see his mind turn over these questions. And yet he is content to be airily, and almost uncharacteristically, nonchalant about evidence on a question that truly merits his awe and his serious probing.

Perot and his wife have been prominent, extravagant contributors to Planned Parenthood, and they were early enthusiasts in advancing the practice of abortion. The only concession that Perot will make to the presence of a victim is to allow that "every little baby is a precious thing in this world and we don't have to create them unless we want to." But William Buckley has pointed out the logical inversion: If Perot truly regards each human life as "precious," that would make an absurdity of his willingness to let these young lives be destroyed for the most casual reasons. And yet, the deeper theme may be contained in the line that persists in his interviews, that "we don't have to create [these babies] unless we want to." (Interview with Larry King, April 16.) I have been struck by the serious disposition of many Christians to regard children as gifts. In that understanding, they acknowledge the mirage of "planning," and find more charm in opening themselves to a grander mystery. They know that they truly did not "make" the children they conceived; they did not invent those extraordinary retinas or any other part of their miraculous equipment. And to people who view the world in this way, there is something redolent of the conceit of modernity—to say nothing of a mind askew—in viewing children as beings we "create" or manufacture; indeed, as beings we produce with the same sense of "engineering" that Perot brings to any other matter of consequence.

Tell Us a Story

BUT PEROT'S APPEAL has never really lain in his reasonings on questions of moral moment. His charm has been, rather, in the spinning of stories, and in that spinning, he has claimed a large license to embellish. In short, he tells tall tales, and their tendency is to enlarge himself and his exploits. He figures, in these stories, as the man ready to act, and act selflessly, where other men and institutions are too choked with their procedures or their tangle of motives. But in one story he had spun out, National Public Radio uncovered some telling discrepancies, and when the reporter raised them, he seemed to lose, dramatically, his resilience and good nature.

As Perot told the story, he was called in the early Seventies by "just about everybody who was breathing" in the Nixon Administration, and urged to go to the rescue of a firm called du Pont Glore Forgan. As Perot recounted the problem, if "du Pont Glore Forgan went under, the New York Stock Exchange would cease trading because the fund that was set aside in Wall Street to protect the brokerage houses was out of money." Perot went to the rescue, and for recompense, he sought to have $60 million in losses deducted as a business expense. Perot said that the issue was raised openly with the House Ways and Means Committee, but Linda Wertheimer found a strikingly different account in the *Wall Street Journal*. An amendment was offered to a tax bill, and, according to the *Journal*, it went unnoticed that the amendment delivered one of the largest tax deductions in history for one person. Congressman

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Pete Stark, a member of the committee, later reported that the other members did not know that the tax break was meant for Perot. Perot had hired, as his attorney, Sheldon Cohen, IRS commissioner under Lyndon Johnson, and Cohen had deftly handled the paperwork with the committee. The "outsider" Perot evidently knew how to operate well from the inside.

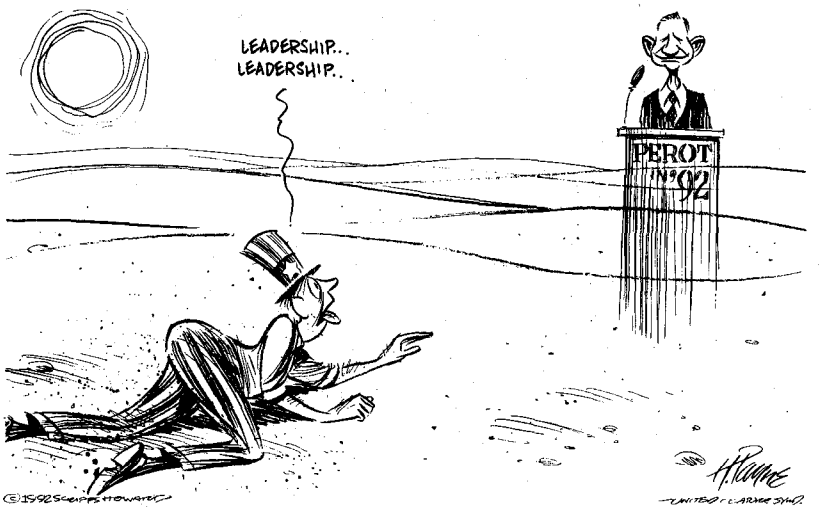
Perot had offered the presidency of du Pont Glore Forgan to William Simon, who declined. When NPR caught up with him, his own account rather deflated the version offered by Perot: "The general notion that if du Pont went down, [the effect on] Wall Street would be . . . tremendous, serious, was so ridiculous on the face of it that . . . it wasn't even worthy of comment. Du Pont was a nothing firm, and its disappearance would be nothing, period."

NPR had done its homework, and the discrepancies were interesting enough to warrant a response. But instead of responding to the substance, Perot turned on the reporter, Linda Wertheimer: "[T]his is a classic setup. . . . [W]hoever you're trying to do a favor for, you've done it, and I'm sure you had a smirk on your mouth as you got me into this" (*All Things Considered*, May 13.)

But the interviews also reveal a deeper problem in Perot. It is not that he is unbriefed on the details of public policy. The problem, rather, is that there are, packed into any of these cases, layers of moral questions, which can bring into play new commitments and portentous steps for the law, and these layers of questions are strangely beyond his sight. They are not beyond his comprehension; it is simply that they do not come into view for him. The point may be illustrated amply by his response to the question of homosexuality.

When Perot was pressed by Barbara Walters to address the subject, he eventually suggested that he would not be inclined to have a homosexual as a member of his Cabinet. Not that he was casting a moral judgment on homosexuality. His concern, he said, was that the matter would stir a controversy, and the controversy would soon draw far more energy and attention than the business of the Administration. Even that lame response would not buy peace for Perot. His remarks created their own controversy, and in a style made familiar by other politicians, he began backpedaling. When he appeared on a town hall with Peter Jennings on ABC, he had already softened a bit. And when he was challenged by a member of his audience as a "bully," he assured the man that he would hire people solely on the grounds of merit and that he was willing to respect the "private" lives of his employees. He had not been willing to respect the private lives of employees who were having affairs, and he had not been the least reluctant to cast moral judgments upon them. But so was he poised now, in a posture of the most affable tolerance, when a lady from the outer South appeared on the screen and asked Perot what he would do to preserve families against the new homosexual interest expressing itself in our politics.

The question gave Perot the occasion to express once again his liberal aversion into inquiring too closely into the private lives of anyone. Peter Jennings asked, rhetorically, whether this was a subject that a President would have any occasion to address. Of course, Peter Jennings has not advanced in his career by showing high powers of reflection, and he proved, in this case, quite as dim as Perot in understanding just where the question pointed. We already live in a time in which



MIRAGE

the public schools of New York City presume to make sixth-graders worldly on the subjects of condoms, AIDS, and anal sex. One of the principal ends of the Left, played out in the campuses, the arts, and the media, is to sweep away all speech that is critical of homosexuality, to remove this subject from the domain of privacy and proclaim its public rightness. When this understanding is projected into the law, it treats an aversion to homosexuality as another form of wrongful "discrimination," on the same plane as discriminations based on race. That understanding, translated into a statute in the District of Columbia, has been used to override the code of a Catholic school and compel Georgetown University to recognize an organization of gay students. If this commitment to gay rights was now wedded to the instruments of the Executive power, the possibilities are bounded only by the dimmest imagination. Private religious colleges have lost their exemption from taxation because they bore objections to dating and marriage across racial lines. Might the same kinds of schools be in danger of losing their tax exemptions if they adhered to a Biblical teaching on homosexuality? Might private schools be threatened with a loss of federal funds if they practiced subtle forms of discrimination against homosexuals—e.g., if there was a "disproportionately" small number of homosexuals hired? Would the weight of the federal courts be brought in to favor a right of a homosexual couple to adopt children? Would a President Perot appoint to the courts judges who regarded the denial of marriage for homosexuals as a violation of the "equal protection of the laws"?

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Anyone who has not been asleep over the past several years would recognize that these are anything but remote possibilities. And yet, Perot still seems serenely unaware of these implications. He is quite far, then, from grasping the fact that they can come before him, as President, in a parade of practical measures and Executive Orders, if he merely licenses this movement by pronouncing the right words. And at the beginning of July, he began to pronounce the magic words. Perot sent a statement of assurance to organizations of gays that, if he were elected President, "discrimination based on gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation will not be tolerated." He continued to be evasive on the question of homosexuals in the military, but in the meantime he has taken a decisive step. He has accepted the premise that discriminations based on "sexual orientation" are as presumptively wrong as discriminations based on race. Once that step is taken, the succeeding steps fall into place far more easily.

Blinkered

PEROT SEEMS genuinely not to notice those next steps. In fact, it may be said that Perot does not look ahead—or back. He has no cultivated sense of the chain of moves leading out from the poses he strikes or the answers he snaps off. But he seems to have even less of a sense of the way the field before him has been cabined and shaped by institutions, bearing principles, with precedents accumulated over time, tracing back to reasons once offered well.

Nowhere does he betray this obtuseness quite as deeply as in his plea for "re-industrializing" America. He would prescribe a more intimate collaboration between government and business, ending what he calls their "adversarial relationship." Perot apparently fancies himself as the "new man," breaking the fetters of the past and leading his country into the future. But as Harry Truman used to say, the only thing new is the history we have not read yet. What Perot regards as ideas of crisp novelty are really rather dated. He does not seem to realize that his speeches sound like a virtual replay of General Hugh Johnson, the crusty head of the National Recovery Administration during those "inventive," early days of the New Deal. Johnson had sought to bring, to the crisis of the Depression, the novel lessons of administration gleaned from the First World War. In that time of crisis, government directed industry on a grand scale—or, as Johnson preferred to say, government and industry cooperated, in unprecedented ways, for the public good. As the vision was played out in the 1930s, it led to an American form of "corporatism." Government would carve the public domain into different spheres for different industries, dominated by the main associations of producers and unions; indeed, the power of the government in making law in these fields would be transferred to boards drawn from the leading companies and unions. As the Supreme Court recognized, it was the most grotesque delegation of legal authority from public agencies to private interests. Against the most "progressive" opinion of the age, the Court put a decisive and merciful end to this bold new experiment.

I do not imagine that Perot would really wish to create anew the details of the NRA, but if he showed more awareness of that earlier venture, he would be more alert to the points of caution. He might grasp, for example, what is morally troubling even in his plea to end the "adversarial" relation between government and business. Certainly it would be a decided gain if the government were more sensitive to the needs of business before it moved with heavy regulations. But the Founders knew precisely what they were saying when they provided that the Federal Government would "regulate" commerce. To regulate is to lay down the rules that govern the conduct of commerce. A government that "regulates" business is not a government that "owns" business or displaces an economy composed of firms under private ownership. The late Justice George Sutherland once explained the problem at the root: The government cannot be a collaborator with business, or a partner in business, or a competitor with private business, and at the same time be the agent that lays down the rules to regulate business. For the government then would be a judge in its own cause. If a government under Perot began to direct investment, or favor certain industries in the competition with Japan, might it not come under a temptation to rig the market, or tilt the advantages to the industries that received the backing of the government?

This raises the curious question of why Perot should be in politics now at all: if his claim to authority is a knack of "fixing" the problems of industry, why is he not offering himself as chief consultant to private companies? Plato had Socrates say in the *Gorgias* that, before we give an architect a commission to build a public building, we ask to see his portfolio of private buildings he has built. Apart from his own business, Electronic Data Systems (EDS), which he sold to General Motors, Perot's ventures have not been attended by any notable success. For all of the useful discussion he churned up at GM, he had little constructive effect, and the question may be raised: If he could exercise no leverage, as a leading stockholder, in "fixing" the problems of GM, what leverage would he exercise from afar as the head of the Federal Government? Does he have it in mind to seek new levers for the law, new powers that would allow the government to intervene in private industry for the sake of rearranging the structure of plants and the relations of production? Or is he offering mainly his experience and counsel? But in that event, would his offer not be far more compelling if he had attended more closely to his private portfolio and given us some examples of the businesses he has already "fixed"?

That may only be to ask again, What is the malady for which he purports to be the remedy? Of course, the same questions could have been leveled at many other candidates, who have been no more luminous in explaining why they are there. Ronald Reagan often did not have the details of policy securely in hand (though

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Reagan did seem to have a vivid sense of history, and a sense of the lessons emanating from the New Deal). And George Bush has not always been deft in looking ahead, to the traps contained, say, in the compromises over the Civil Rights bill. But in the cases of Reagan and Bush, and other political figures, their remarks are always given a framework by the political party in which they have placed themselves, and by the character they have described in their public records. Mr. Reagan did reveal, in his years as governor, the concerns that marked a pattern in his judgments. George Bush may not have a flair for expounding principles, but we might say that his ellipses are filled in by his own Administration: there are the pro-lifers at the Department of Justice, Health and Human Services, and the White House staff; the adherents of a free economy and property rights; and the votaries of a conservative jurisprudence. As often as he might have caused us to bite our lips, we still know that George Bush presides over an Administration that is emphatically conservative in its commitments and its reflexes. But that is to remind ourselves that party may be far more important, as an institutional force, in marking the character of an Administration than the personalities of the people at the top. It has been common for a long time to be catty about political parties, and certainly Perot's campaign depends on the most thoroughgoing denigration of parties. And yet, that is a further measure of the serious things that Perot and his followers do not respect because they do not entirely understand them. To bring groups together in a stable coalition, it is necessary to work out the principles that reconcile their interests. It made a profound difference that Lincoln was able to forge an alliance between Northern businessmen and Western farmers in supporting a regime of free labor and rejecting slavery. To articulate the principles of a party is to articulate a certain perspective on the regime itself, and to build a coalition to support those principles is nothing less than to fashion the constituency to preserve a new political order.

That is what Franklin Roosevelt did in the 1930s, and that is what Republican leaders have been seeking to do since the 1960s. When it works well, it can produce a kind of alchemy: who would have predicted that the preppie George Bush, running against Ronald Reagan in 1980, would be presiding over an Administration that urged the Supreme Court, in 1991, to overturn *Roe* v. *Wade*? But that is the routine alchemy that parties produce all the time. They connect groups, like businessmen and pro-lifers, and they encourage them to absorb interests that are not their own. Burke sought to teach this long ago when he explained that parties offered "hard essays of practiced friendship and experimented fidelity." And those essays were molded to a classic understanding, that the exercise of public authority should be directed to public ends, rather than put in the service of private interests.

His Followers' Servant

ROSS PEROT has proclaimed that he would run only as the "servant" of his followers and "I won't belong to anybody but them." It is the measure of the distance between our day and Burke's that this boast is regarded, by Perot, as a recommendation: that he has not burdened himself with obligations in the course of his ascent. To be connected to his followers mainly through the mass media or the electronic town hall is not to be connected to them in any compelling way. And when Perot says he belongs only to his followers, he means that he belongs to no one at all. He is the man who springs from no alliances, encumbered by no institutions, and he is liberated from the past of our politics. He is, in short, the man from nowhere. He may be engaging, but we would be in the position of that ward committeeman in Chicago, told that there was an applicant for a job in his outer office. When he asked who sent him, he was told, "Nobody." With no personal aversion, but with a proper skepticism, he replied, "We don't want nobody nobody sent." □

PEROTIAN ECONOMICS

TOM BETHELL

OF ALL the people I spoke to about the economic prospects of a Perot Presidency, by far the most enthusiastic was Jude Wanniski, the supply-sider and president of Polyconomics, Inc. "He's everything that we've been looking for," he said. "He has the potential to be Reagan cubed." In a report to his clients dated June 11, Wanniski wrote: "We can now confidently predict H. Ross Perot will be elected President of the United States in November, probably by a landslide in the Electoral College. As the Ruling Class is exhausted after sixty years of unremitting depressions or inflations or wars, hot and cold, only Perot understands that the electorate now insists upon a return to normalcy." Wanniski is also predicting a 6500 Dow sometime in the next four years.

In May he met with Perot, who told him they didn't even need to discuss the capital-gains tax cut that is

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urged by Wanniski. They were "joined at the hip" on that issue, Perot said. What makes Wanniski so confident about Perot? After the Los Angeles riots, Perot appeared on *Meet the Press* and was asked what he would do for the inner cities. "Eliminate the capital-gains tax, because the risks are so high for capital that the rewards must also be high," Wanniski quotes Perot as saying. Jackpot! "Perot is the only presidential candidate of the dozens in the past generation" who would have given this correct answer, Wanniski believes. "Not only the right policy, but the correct reason." Even Jack Kemp would "carefully include it in a longer list."

What about Perot's reluctance to be pinned down on the issues? No problem there. "If Perot were to now cast his feet in concrete on a host of specific economic ideas . . . ," Wanniski claims, "this would interrupt the learning process he is undergoing with the people."

Paul Craig Roberts, assistant treasury secretary in Reagan's first term, often sounds pessimistic in his columns about the economy. I asked him what he thought about Perot's economics. "We don't know what they are," he said, sounding very pessimistic. Then he neatly contradicted Wanniski.

"I warned Perot a couple of months ago that if he didn't define himself the media would define him instead," he said. To back this up he faxed me a *Business Week* column. "Perot says he will lay out his program by midsummer, but he doesn't have that long," Roberts wrote in May. "By then, the media will have made of him what they will." Roberts pointed out that Perot wants to get the country "back on track," but "has not even identified which track he wants to get the country back on."

Roberts told me that "the American people would like to have a revolution and they would like to elect Perot. But he hasn't defined himself in a way that makes that inevitable. Now the media are defining him. They *don't* want Perot. They might like him if he started sounding like a left-wing Harvard professor, but he doesn't have the right accent for that."

Here's what Perot should tell us, according to Roberts: "We've become a feudal state when the government's claim to an individual's income is as great as that of the individual who earns it." Instead, he's talking about cutting waste in government.

"We're going to go through department by department," Perot has said. "We're going to get rid of waste."

I asked Milton Friedman of the Hoover Institution what he thought about cutting government waste. "There's no such category," said the Nobel Laureate.

One of the subjects that Friedman follows with interest is the attempt to reform the government education system. Perot became involved in such an effort in Texas, but seemed to think that the solution was higher taxes from Texans to raise pay for teachers. "My understanding is that the reforms didn't touch the fundamentals because they didn't undermine the power of the education bureaucracy," Friedman said. "He never came out for the voucher system and he never came out for parental choice."

In general, Friedman said, the qualities required for business success and political success are very different: "A business is organized from the top down, a decent country is organized from the bottom up." Over the years, Friedman has found businessmen and academics to be among the leading opponents of a free market—for opposite reasons. "The academic wants freedom for himself but not for anyone else. The businessman likes freedom in general but he wants a special deal for himself. Maybe Perot is a noble exception, but so far he has not shown any sign that he is."

Friedman's principal objection was to Perot's position on international trade, which he found "completely unacceptable." Perot has opposed the Mexico free-trade agreement as threatening to the "highest-paid blue-collar jobs" (union jobs, mostly). He believes that the task of capitalism is "to create and protect jobs in America—not Mexico."

Alan Reynolds, director of economic research at the Hudson Institute, said that Perot "has given no indication that he understands what the problems are, let alone what to do about them. He hasn't proposed eliminating any programs that I am aware of, or cutting government back to constitutional size."

Agreeing with Friedman, Reynolds said his "biggest reservation" was with Perot's protectionism. It could be "a little foolish for a Texan," he added. One-third of Texas's exports go to Mexico, and one-third of the business done by retail stores along the Mexican border comes from Mexican tourists. "This is what saved Texas from the drop in oil prices," Reynolds said.

On the tax side, Perot has not been at all promising. He said on the *Today* show that he wouldn't raise taxes—except in an emergency. Earlier he said "we all know" that we must raise taxes. The one thing he has not done is unequivocally call for a tax cut. Reynolds guessed that on taxes Perot and Clinton "would be

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about the same: little or nothing on capital gains, and I think both candidates would go for an added income-tax bracket of 38 per cent." Reynolds also believes that Perot "would be inclined to accept the millionaire's surtax that Rostenkowski's committee recently passed."

"It did?"

"Why do you think the stock market dropped July 2?"

Dick Armey, Republican congressman from Dallas, is one of the few members of Congress with a sound grasp of economics. He counts Perot's entrepreneurial background as a "point in his favor," but he is dismayed by Perot's concern for (subsidized) dairy farmers. Like Reynolds and Friedman, Armey added: "I just don't think he understands international trade." When he taught economics, Armey found that free trade was the toughest idea to get across. And since "demagoguery is more easily understood than data," Perot may persist in this folly. Perot's support in Texas, Armey said, remains "as strong as horseradish."

Armey made the interesting point that Perot's money is in danger of insulating him from good advice. Campaign donors are usually successful people, Armey said, and you do listen carefully to people when you ask for their money. They would be disposed to warn Perot against the perils of protectionism, but he's rich enough to ignore them.

Unlike George Bush or Bill Clinton, Perot is enthusiastic about industrial policy. "Target the industries of the future," he confidently asserts. "Have an alliance between government and business." He shows an instinctive (probably not a thought-out) distrust of markets when he talks of "long-term plans" for industry. Fred Smith of the Competitive Enterprise Institute said that Perot-the-outsider should know that in the Washington in-fighting, it's the dinosaurs that are "able to use their political power to prop up their declining economic power." Rising entrepreneurs don't have the time to "drop everything and go to Washington." Therefore, industrial policy tends to perpetuate the past.

Perot's activist temperament no doubt accounts for much of his appeal, but it's not what's needed for economic recovery. For that we need a submissive government, one that umpires occasional disputes but does not intervene. Perot fits more into the give-'em-hell tradition of Harry Truman than the laissez-faire outlook of Ronald Reagan.

Perot has repeatedly said that the problem in Washington is "gridlock." If he means this, he has misconstrued the problem. Constitutional government is supposed to be gridlocked. The real problem is that the Treasury lock has been picked. Government spending is out of control, and taxpayers are expected to make good on the ever-mounting volume of checks that are made out to victim groups.

The old constitutional restraints have been unlocked, partly because the Framers did not anticipate the extent to which organized groups would be able to vote themselves benefits; and partly because the GOP as currently led is afraid to combat the politics of envy. It's as though the Democrats and the Republican leadership had blithely taken Adam Smith's dictum, that there is a lot of ruin in a nation, not as a warning but as a campaign slogan. If Perot were at least discussing the problem along these lines there might be *some* hope that he would try to cure it, but he is doing no such thing.

With his businessman's background, Perot conceives of government as a badly run company. The truth is that it's a runaway monopoly. Perot probably doesn't grasp the upside-down incentives of government agencies, whose employees do their best to spend (meaning lose) money as quickly as possible. Bill Clinton has now started calling this "investing," perhaps having taken the advice of Peter Peterson, the former GOP secretary of commerce. Perot is smart enough to figure all this out, but he hasn't done so yet. It requires thought, initially, not action.

Can We Take 'Four More Years'?

HOPES FOR Ross Perot derive mainly from disillusionment with President Bush. If the economy were booming today, it's safe to say that Perot wouldn't be running at all. Bush's greatest error was to entrust economic policy to people—Nicholas Brady at Treasury and Dick Darman at OMB—who inherited old wealth. This ill disposes them toward policies that would create new wealth. Darman has gone to some trouble to conceal his wealth from the media. (Not that they would have reported it—they have been too busy eating out of his hand.) Brady tirelessly reminds the President that he "loses on the fairness issue" if he pushes too hard for a capital-gains tax cut.

In entrusting the economy to people secretly guilt-ridden, George Bush has imperiled his own Presidency, not to mention the economy. He certainly does not understand this, and the media aren't planning to tell him. The quagmire created by Darman's and Brady's ineptness, and Bush's inability to see what is going on, has dispirited all who believe in free markets. And it seems unlikely that there will be any change of heart at this late date. "Four more years" hardly bear thinking about. The best hope, therefore, seems to be to throw out the millionaire inheritors and pipe aboard the self-made billionaire.

In style and speech Perot appears conservative, and he gives the impression that he would restore self-government to the people. Perhaps his greatest asset is not the quantity of his money but the fact that his daddy didn't give it to him. This makes it less likely that he can be made to feel guilty about capitalism; and less likely that he will casually undermine it, as Bush's dismal advisors have done. For those who believe in entrepreneurship, Perot looks far more promising than Republican Old Money or the familiar Democratic appeals to envy. But the economic problems we face today can be resolved only by someone whose mind is resolutely focused on the problem of rampant government. The evidence suggests that Ross Perot hasn't even begun to think along such lines. □

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Meet Ross Perot

MIND YOUR MEMORABILIA

The contempt of the academics and Beltway types is one of the biggest things Ross Perot has going for him. Another is the quality of the people who support him.

BEN C. TOLEDANO

MAYBE the voters aren't doing the right thing for the right reason, but they're beginning to take a serious interest in our country's monumental problems and in the elected officials who have created them. Officials whom we, of course, elected. Say what? We did what? We elected those bums? Call it "When Rip Van Winkle Woke Up and Was Introduced to a Joint Session of Congress." He had a big decision to make: he could either go back to sleep or take some action.

The voters decided to take action—against *their* elected officials; *their* non-leaders. Over the deficit, the bloated budgets, the thievery, finger-pointing, wimpery, check-bouncing, special interests, campaign contributions. And that's just for openers.

How in the world did all these problems come about? Who did these things to us? We did (although we're not yet prepared to accept the blame). We bums elected them bums and we bums are gonna have to throw them bums out. Dem bums, dem bums, dem sly bums. After all, can we really blame terminal self-servants for not being public servants? Why do we think they ran for office? For money and power if they don't have money; for power if they already have money. That wasn't the way it was supposed to work. No? But, that's the way it has been working.

Then out of the Old West came the little jug-eared cowboy. "I'll untie you from those train tracks, missy—if you really want me to. And you ain't got much time to spare 'cause that engine ain't gonna stop on its own."

"Don't pay any attention to him," the savants tell us. "Don't burn the barn down to get rid of the rats." It's a takeoff on the old baby/bath problem, except now, it's don't throw the water out just 'cause the baby's bad.

A case in point. Harvard's professor of government, Harvey Mansfield, who has plenty of time to think, "fervently" hopes, in *The New Republic*, that "the system, consisting of the habits of electors and the institutions that form them, will ultimately win out." And what is "the system"? "Our Constitution," he says. Glad he cleared that up. But Mansfield is very troubled and asks: "What are the weaknesses in our system that make it vulnerable to an upstart runt like Ross Perot?" That's pretty harsh language from an ivory towerite and a member of the "cultural elite." If Perot were a real general, like Eisenhower or others who've become President, says Mansfield, then maybe it wouldn't be so bad that he's never held public office, because generals at least have "experience with public responsibility and public accountability." But worse than not even being a general is the fact that Perot is "a businessman with experience in dodging the government or using it." Wow! Not even a professional politician but a businessman! We can't have that. Well, enough now for Professor Mansfield, who sees support for Perot as only "the kind of momentary enthusiasm" which the Constitution was framed to discourage.

Disgust and Despair

NOT ONE of the dozens of Perot supporters I've spoken with is backing him because of "momentary enthusiasm." Their efforts to seek an alternative to the offerings of the two parties are the result of long-term disgust and despair. Many of these people simply haven't voted in recent elections.

A tennis-playing grandmother in Baton Rouge says: "I had put politics out of my mind, it upset me so much; it's been a long time since I thought my vote could make any difference. Perot has caused me to think about voting again . . . for him, that is."

A doctor in Winston-Salem says: "For a number of years, I've been worried that only something really bad, like the Los Angeles situation all over the country, could bring us to our senses. . . . Perot may offer some hope of a peaceful solution to our problems. Maybe he can do it; I don't know; I sure hope so."

From a fortyish lawyer in Biloxi:

Mr. Toledano is a lawyer practicing in Louisiana and Mississippi.

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"All this talk about foreign policy! I want to hear about domestic policy; I want solutions at home *now*. They can't use the cold war any more to keep our minds off the fact our country's going to hell."

A veteran waiter in a New Orleans restaurant says: "This so-called two-party system is bulls---. Why should we be limited to a couple of hacks picked by a handful of party activists? What's democratic about not having any real choice?"

Not an Echo?

SPEAKING of real choices, what about the House and Senate? Even if those elected aren't the very best that PAC money can buy, once in, they stay in unless they bounce too many checks or leave out of sincere frustration. How's that "system" doing, Professor Mansfield? He says: "Perot will make the system worse because he himself represents the system at its worst." Now get this: Perot, though not a part of "the system" and actually the one fighting "the system," represents "the system at its worst."

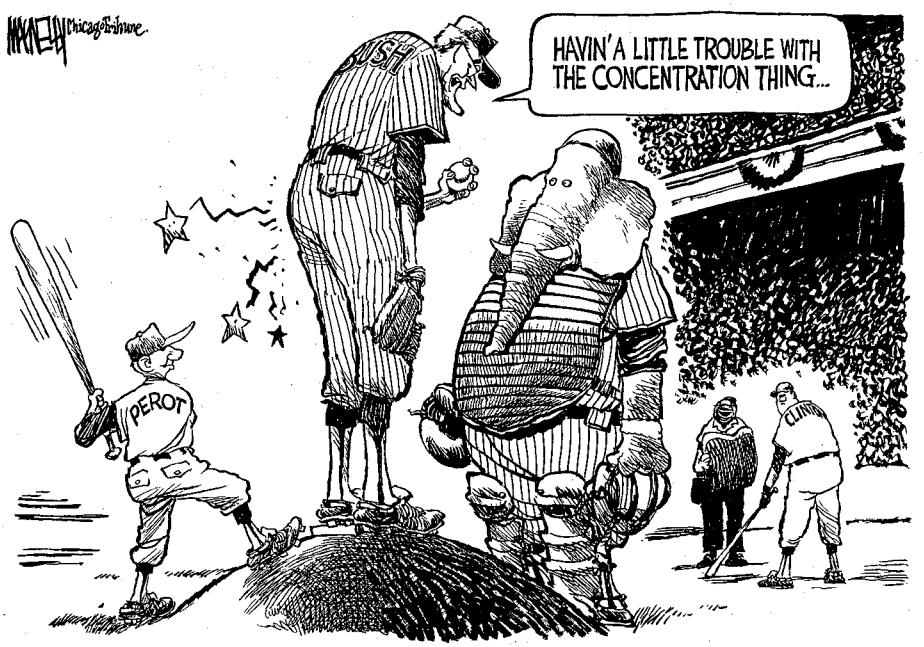
Perot has some people believing that "the system" doesn't automatically solve its own problems. He says, "Can't leave it to chance and can't leave it to the folks who've screwed it up to begin with." How's that for inflammatory and un-American demagoguery? I guess systems fare best under totalitarian regimes where the people are prohibited from meddling with them.

I asked one Perot supporter, an insurance agent in Slidell, La., how he felt about his candidate trying to buy the Presidency for himself. "Shoot, man," he answered, "at least we know where the money's coming from; to me that's a damn good step in the right direction."

The Nation, that toothless watchdog over America's rights and freedoms, is concerned over Perot's candidacy because "no one can say what the Texas billionaire actually stands for." That question is applied like a random drug test for athletes. What do Bush and Clinton actually stand for? Many of our Presidents have been for education, brotherhood, high employment, free enterprise, equal justice and opportunity for all, God and country, leadership, and "family values," and against Communism, poverty, ignorance, bigotry, pestilence, disease, and crime. I'll bet we do know where Perot stands on those issues.

But of course that's not what the elevated thinkers mean by "issues." As one Perot backer, a New Orleans antique dealer, put it: "I'll tell you what those damn politicians have done. They've put us at each other's throats over race, abortion, school prayer, and other 'single issues' and split us up along those lines. Then they study the numbers and decide how many special-interest votes they need to get elected. Of course, we've taken the bait; we've let them get away with it. Perot impresses me as a big-picture guy; I like that. As far as I'm concerned, there's only one issue. Leadership."

And on that score—what kind of never read about the books and art objects closest to the hearts of Bush and Clinton? How'd you like to browse through their art collections? In either case, it shouldn't take long. Bush probably has a fine group of tastefully framed, signed Bachrach photographs of Fortune 500 CEOs and maybe a few pictures of his favorite hunting and fishing guides. It's fun just to imagine Quayle's collection of autographed photos of PGA greats. But what about Clinton? That's a lot tougher. Certainly he's got signed photographs from some Kennedys inscribed, "Keep the dream alive," and maybe from William Fulbright and Sam Walton. Miss Swartz writes in the *New York Times* "To know the man, you need only know his memorabilia." Fine, Miss Swartz, but how in the world do we get to know people who don't have any



man Perot is, and what kind of leader he would be—we've gotten to know one helluva lot about him, a lot more in the ways that count than we know about either of the other candidates.

Garry Wills, Mimi Swartz, and others have given us detailed accounts of the books, paintings, statues, and memorabilia in Ross Perot's office. From those objects the psychoanalyses have naturally followed. We are told of some of Perot's heroes, Norman Rockwell, Frederic Remington, Theodore Roosevelt, Attila the Hun, POWs, Winston Churchill, Raoul Wallenberg, Thomas Edison, George Washington, James Madison, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln, not a bad group on balance. Why have we memorabilia? Better bald eagles than no birds at all; better *Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun* than no books at all; better Norman Rockwell than no paintings at all.

One of "the right element" even believes the quality of candidates for the Presidency is not really that important. George Will sees Clinton as the weakest challenger since John W. Davis, who ran against Coolidge in 1924. He says that Perot "may soon be seen as even less than a sound bite," and that "Bush is already on the list of weakest Presidents." Will concludes his article, "Battle of the Bantamweights," by observing that America is usually much better than its politicians, and "if it could not survive me-

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diocre Presidents, it would be long gone." I think Will's dead wrong; America is no better than its politicians and those who elect them. Why does he let the voters off the hook?

It is difficult to believe that it is folly to look for leaders who might be able to solve some of our most critical problems. Yet Robert Fitch, writing in *The Nation*, says that Americans need to discover "that this particular wizard [Perot] has no better idea of how to get them out of their troubles than they do." So Perot doesn't have the answer; the people who think he does don't have the answer. Who's got the answer? Mansfield says "the system" is the answer. Then why do we harbor this not so quiet sense of desperation?

Professor Mansfield glosses over the fact that "the system," defined by him as "actually our Constitution," doesn't mention political parties. But that's okay because we've had them for a long time and should therefore be restricted by them forever. At any rate, the Republicans and the Democrats each decide upon their presidential candidate, and that's that. We may pick one or not pick at all, the latter position supposedly being indicative of poor citizenship. But some people don't like either candidate and still want to vote. Why not Perot? No, he's outside of the system, and he's got, well, bad memorabilia, and there's no cure for that.

If, as Mansfield says, an ongoing process of democratization has "gradually brought the Constitution, against its original intention, closer and closer to popular will," the exact opposite has occurred regarding the political process. Put in simple terms, the federal judicial system has replaced the legislative branch because of the latter's default. Cowardice and unethical responses to special-interest groups have essentially deactivated the Congress. And, when it *has* acted, it has produced the likes of the Keating Five and Jim Wright. Not since Lyndon Johnson, whether we like him or not, have we had a President who could effectively kick Congress's butt.

The Party's Over

LIBERALISM deservedly met its end because all it could give us was more unqualified candidates and more unqualified voters to vote for them. As things now stand, who needs to be able to read and write in order to vote for the crew we've got in Congress? Conservatives also failed to meet the challenge to come up with new ideas. Both philosophies became fragmented to the point where neither had any cohesive identity. Individuals are now identified on the basis of single issues. What we have are millions of people thinking: "I agree with 95 per cent of your positions, but I don't agree with you about racial problems, or abortion, or Israel, or whatever other single issue; therefore, I am against you overall." The politician responds by finding his supporters among the 5-per-centers; that greatly reduces his responsibilities.

Certain votes are already in. The two-party system has degenerated into a tool to maintain the status quo. Concurrent with that failure is the loss of any real meaning to the terms conservatism and liberalism. Both the parties and the philosophies are morally and intellectually bankrupt.

One Perot supporter I talked to, the owner of a scrap business in Gulfport, Miss., said: "I hope Perot *is* a tough, mean little bastard. We need one of them bad." The "system" isn't going to do it on its own. The Framers of the Constitution may have envisioned abuses, but not like the ones we've had. Dr. Caligari's not the answer. Come back, Shane, and bring Frederic Remington and Norman Rockwell with you. □

Tales Out of School

WHY DO AMERICAN KIDS LEARN SO LITTLE?

Herewith, several steps to help them learn more—the first being to decide they *ought* to learn.

ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG

AMERICAN children learn far less in school than European and Japanese children do, although America spends far more per pupil. Why is so little education achieved for so much money? The answer may lie in a major oddity in the American creed.

Europeans have always regarded children as barbarians to be painfully civilized by schooling. Childhood is thought to be merely, or mainly, a means to adult achievement. Children are apprentice adults. Schools are to teach them what they will need, even if they cannot see the use of it: language (including grammar), arithmetic, science, history, classics. In Europe there are hardly any of those undemanding classes so frequent in the U.S., such as current events, or home economics.

Of course, the young have never liked the stern demands the schools made. They have preferred to enjoy being young—*gaudeamus igitur juvenes dum sumus*, the students sang—instead of using their young years to prepare for adult careers. But the young could sing all they wanted (in the Latin they learned in school), they had little choice. Without parental support—inheritance and connections—they could never hope to make their way in the world, for which the schools served as gatekeepers. Thus, in Europe—and in Japan, which has swallowed the European idea hook, line, and sinker—the power of the older generation is used to make children spend most of their time doing schoolwork. Occasionally they have rebelled, but, on the whole, they have submitted, become literate, and gone on their way.

In America, however, youth is seen as an end in itself, never merely a means to adult achievement. Children

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rarely are expected to work at anything they don't enjoy. Teachers are expected to "motivate" their students and to make learning a pleasure, even if this means going easy on unavoidably tedious stretches. The young themselves tend to see adulthood as a hard-to-avoid postscript, almost a decline. Many adults nostalgically agree.

Parents seldom can make unwilling children do homework, and teachers wisely don't ask for what they can't get. To demand vexatious schoolwork of children seems almost immoral in the American context.

Unlike Europeans, Americans do not expect their children to continue in their own social position: they regard their children as the hope of the future. Far from imposing the civilization of the past, education is to help the young to "find themselves," to unfold their innate creativity. The young will do better if less encumbered by the past. Margaret Mead even told parents that they must learn from the young, who "have the knowledge."

To most Americans the future always has been more real than the past. This notion makes teaching hard, for teaching requires, at least temporarily, submission to the authority of ancient ideas, and of teachers who transmit them. All learning initially must rest on the authority of the past; after all, the past is all that can be learned.

Pupils must first accept the teachers' authority. Teachers cannot explain to an eight-year-old why words are spelled as they are, or why two and two make four, not five. It is only after much material has been absorbed by rote—children fortunately like learning by rote, although progressive teachers don't like to let them—that students can begin to examine critically and usefully what they are learning. If the authority of the older generation is weak, little knowledge will be absorbed.

We largely let students elect the classes they prefer, assuming that they know enough to fashion their own curriculum, although they cannot yet have learned how to evaluate the importance of various kinds of knowledge. Of course, they elect the easy classes, sometimes of dubious value. They get the same credit toward a diploma for easy classes as they get for harder ones, the same for Contemporary Drama as for Advanced Algebra.

Mr. van den Haag is a Distinguished Scholar at the Heritage Foundation.

Via Media

THERE MUST be a reasonable middle way between a joyous childhood and an exclusively instrumental use of it, a way of combining the civilizing influence of science, history, and literature with the enjoyment of youth. The young must learn to learn as well as to play. Some even may enjoy learning once they try it. Is there anything that can be done to bring about the necessary changes? Consider some beginning steps.

Public schools currently have a monopoly on tax money, which they jealously guard, and because public schools do not compete with one another—pupils are assigned—each public school is in a near monopoly position. The usual effects of monopoly occur: shoddy products at high cost to the involuntary purchasers (taxpayers). A voucher system, entitling parents to choose any public school in the state for their children—and, later on, any approved private school as well—would introduce some competition and might eliminate the worst effects of the monopoly. Schools never should be subsidized; *schooling* should be, by granting vouchers to parents.

Other monopoly features should be dismantled as well. Currently nobody, however capable, is allowed to teach without first attending courses in education. This functions as a barrier to entry, strengthening the entrenched monopoly defended by unions. Private schools hire teachers able to teach their subjects well, in spite (or because) of not having attended a school of education. Usually these teachers are much less well paid than public-school teachers; yet their students, on the average, learn more according to all available tests.

In other countries children spend more time in school. It has been suggested therefore that the school day should be lengthened and summer vacations shortened. I doubt that this will help much. It is not that children spend too little time in school; rather, they learn too little in the time they spend. More homework might indeed help, if only marginally.

What ails American schools is not lack of money. We spend much more

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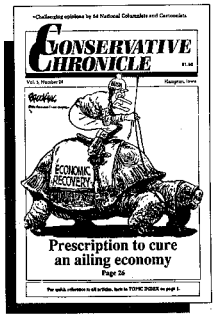

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per pupil (adjusted for inflation) than we did in the past, and far more than other countries do. But the returns in learning are remarkably low. Where does the money go? Far too much goes into non-teaching activities. There is far too much administration, as can be shown irrefutably by comparing the ratio of teaching to non-teaching personnel in private and public schools. I do not claim that these administrators, counselors, et al. do not work hard. Rather, the work doesn't contribute much to the education of children. They keep each other busy.

Then there is the quality of the teachers themselves. Children cannot learn much from teachers who do not command basic skills. Scandalously few do.

Teachers have some reasonable complaints. They get many children from homes to which learning is as alien as discipline. Still, most children can learn to spell and to read, can learn elementary grammar and arithmetic—if teachers are allowed to impose the necessary discipline, as they are not now. There are some things that can be learned by doing—in fact, only by doing: carefulness, punctuality, manners, discipline are among them. Anybody can acquire these; but schools make little effort to help. They do not feel they are charged with helping to forge the character of students, many of whom graduate functionally illiterate, with slovenly work habits and manners.

Minimum requirements for a high-school diploma (to which each school should be able to add its own) should be imposed by every state, fulfilled only by passing examinations, including essay tests, graded by teachers from schools other than the one attended by the student.

Public schools also should be allowed to expel students unwilling to learn (or to submit to discipline), as private schools are now. Contrary to much opinion, not only would the schools be better off, the expelled students themselves are likely to do better by not being kept when schooling is unproductive for them.

We should stop assuming complacently that our children are being educated just because we have many schools with lots of teachers and myriad administrators. Currently they learn very little, not because they are stupid, but because they are taught very little. It is easier that way for everybody, the kids, the teachers, the parents. But we can't afford it any longer. If we want to avoid a rapid decline of America we must make sure that our children are educated rather than just entertained and kept in school. This will require more changes than I proposed. But we have to begin somewhere. □

Art and the Social Set

THE ECSTASIES OF JOHN FROHNMAYER

There is a class of Americans for whom art is a kind of religion. The former NEA head is one of them.

RICHARD GRENIER

IT IS not often that one hears a high government official depart on wings of song. But John Frohnmayer, when he was sacked as head of the National Endowment for the Arts, burst into a rapturous rendition of the Shaker hymn "Simple Gifts," first at a farewell meeting with his staff, and again during a farewell speech at the National Press Club. This was all the more curious in that Frohnmayer sang this hymn of the Shakers—a now extinct Christian sect—as part of his attack on Senator Jesse Helms and the "fundamentalist religious Right" that he claimed was driving him from office. The departing NEA chief warned ominously that the deadly hand of the religious Right would soon fall on public broadcasting, then on government funding for universities, then on science. Who knew where it would end?

In Frohnmayer's imagination, the Shakers appear to have been an altogether free and easy lot. But it is doubtful that this sect, perhaps the most puritanical to emerge from the early nineteenth century's Great Revival, would have shared his appreciation of Andres Serrano's NEA-funded photograph of a crucifix immersed in the artist's urine, or of Ramona Lofton's rap poem "Wild Thing," celebrating the exhilarating rape of the Central Park jogger, which appeared in an NEA-funded publication. Frohnmayer might, of course, have heard from feminist colleagues of Mother Ann, who in Shaker theology was worshipped as the female element of the godhead. But the feminists would probably have relished as little as the Shakers seeing Mother Ann's picture immersed in someone's urine. After all, *some* things are sacred.

It might have been instructive if he could have spent some time at a colony of Shakers. Shakers were forbidden to read books without permission, to read newspapers without permission, to read letters without permission, to write letters without permission, to kneel with the left knee first, to put on the left shoe first, to raise the left foot first when ascending the stairs, to put the left thumb over the right thumb while praying, to lean against a wall, to play with dogs, to play with cats, to give nicknames, to have an umbrella, to eat fruit after supper, to walk heavily . . . The list is long.

Frohnmayer also summoned T. S. Eliot to his aid. But Eliot is not merely a symbol of High Art, an icon to be dragged forth to lend tone to what otherwise would be a vulgar brawl. He had views. And he made his views on art and religion particularly clear in a famous essay on "Religion and Literature" and, indeed, in a whole volume entitled *Christianity and Culture*. He wrote, "The mass of the population in a Christian society should not be ex-

Mr. Grenier's most recent book is Capturing the Culture: Film, Art, and Politics.

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posed to a way of life in which there is too sharp and frequent a conflict [with] what is Christian." He also wrote about ensuring that the "habits and feelings of the people are not too suddenly affronted or too violently outraged" and about modern liberals' "licensing the opinions of the most foolish," statements that would horrify the arts establishment in the unlikely eventuality that it stumbled across them. So, how did Mr. Frohnmayer get to quoting above his station?

Early Pro-Helmsianism

HIS PATH to affronting the people's habits and outraging their feelings was a conventional one. A lawyer and former chairman of the Oregon Arts Commission, he worked for the Bush presidential campaign in 1988. Oregon's Republican senators, Mark Hatfield and Bob Packwood, lobbied hard for his selection for the NEA post, and his appointment was seen as a political payoff to Oregon and even "the West," supposedly more populist than the elitist East. Frohnmayer, moreover, was said to have "no political baggage," talking in those days quite differently from today. "I think that Senator Helms," he said at the time, "is well intentioned and sincere in his criticism, and we can't just call that censorship because, after all, this is the public arena." Indeed, he said this sort of thing again and again. "People care about what sort of symbolism is supported by our government," for instance. And, "If it's public money, there are public responsibilities."

Post-confirmation, however, John Frohnmayer had one of the swiftest conversions in political history. Gone were his respect for the sincerity and intentions of Senator Helms, and his awareness of the link between public money and public responsibility. Gone was his rejection of the irresponsible use of the word "censorship." Soon, the new NEA chief was telling a press conference that he could see no difference between censorship and refusing a grant on the basis of artistic merit. Taken literally, this would mean that to judge a plate of dog food as having little artistic merit was "censorship." Something anarchic had been loosed in John Frohnmayer's head.

Frohnmayer comes, of course, from what is called a "socially prominent" family, and is therefore subject to the artistic temptation of the moneyed classes. The pattern is really quite simple. For a few dollars anyone can go to the movies. The theater costs a few dollars more, the opera quite a few dollars more than that. But to buy a Cézanne or a Gauguin you need real money. And so it came to pass that America's moneyed classes—while knowing very little about art and not even displaying much interest in art *per se*—have for many generations considered the fine arts as "their" sort of thing. At museum receptions they meet "their" sort of people. "Their" sort sits on museum boards. Museums and opera houses have replaced churches in the moral imagination of our betters.

In Jeane Kirkpatrick's dealings with other countries' diplomats at the UN, she was struck by how deeply permeated they were with a clear sense of their own nations' interest, a trait she found conspicuously absent in the American Foreign Service. And I am indebted to Ambassador Kirkpatrick for the suggestion that the custodians of the American art establishment are subject to a related failing: in their case a disinclination to defend or even perceive the sustaining values of our nation.

Indeed, during the last 25 years or so, when the politics of the artistic community turned virulently radical—anti-capitalist, anti-religious, anti-American—few of the social elite were offended. For some, even when they noticed what was going on, there was a cavalier *frisson* in not being so vulgar as to defend the institutions that produced and protected their own wealth. And weren't judgments as to obscenity, pornography, and blasphemy best left to the artists themselves? Wasn't that the gentlemanly way? The snobbish attitude of these artistic radicals toward the philistine many was not likely to cause these people much distress. After all, art was in every sense a class act. It should be defended from the ignorant populace. In an absent-minded, negligent sort of way, this might be the attitude even of George Bush himself.

Yet of all the banal notions of our time one of the most egregious is the image of the unappreciated artist—the artist as a rebel, maligned and attacked by authority. The careers of the French Impressionists, and above all the post-Impressionists Gauguin and Van Gogh (whose legends gave rise to the modern myth), are almost always misconstrued. Their paintings were admired from almost the very start by their neighbors and the general public. Nor were any of them censored or condemned in any way by the state. Their bitter adversaries, and the adversaries of all modern art at its beginnings, were the lords of the period's art establishment—John Frohnmayer's predecessors.

Of course, it is somewhat unjust to the nineteenth-century French art establishment, which was excessively devoted to maintaining conventional standards, to compare it with the NEA, which is excessively devoted to outraging them. Mr. Frohnmayer must have felt betrayed when his deputy and replacement, Anne-Imelda Radice, began vetoing projects over the heads of the endowment's national advisory council on grounds of "sexual explicitness." But Miss Radice seems to be trying to steer a prudent middle course. When nine NEA panelists resigned and two artistic dignitaries, including Stephen Sondheim, refused awards in protest at the grant rejections, she authorized new grants—not for the identical performance artists and projects that had provoked earlier controversies, but for closely related organizations such as Santa Monica's "Highways Inc.," led by homosexual activist Tim Miller, whose claim to artistic achievement has been enhanced by urinating publicly as part of his performance, and New York's "The Kitchen," on whose stage Annie Sprinkle, one of the pornographic film industry's most distinguished performers, invited the audience to explore her vagina.

So the battle is still undecided. Mr. Frohnmayer can take comfort, meanwhile, in other Shaker hymns. I offer him this one, dictated from Heaven to the Shakers in 1838 by the spirit of George Washington:

Via lo via le via le er lan do
Via lo via de via lo ra lorum

For the Shakers were given, in moments of religious ecstasy, to speaking "in tongues," a tradition which mysteriously has come down to John Frohnmayer and which, if all else fails, may yet qualify him for an NEA grant. □

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A Cross of Paper

ALAN REYNOLDS

IT IS HARD to believe that three decades have passed since Milton Friedman shook the world with *Capitalism and Freedom*. It was not his first book, but it was the first aimed at a popular audience. A work of unintimidating size, written with startling clarity and persuasiveness, it immediately captured hearts and minds as nothing else of its kind had done since Hayek's *Road to Serfdom* and Hazlitt's *Economics in One Lesson*.

Many of Friedman's 1962 policy proposals still appear as bold and brilliant as they did back then. His idea of using vouchers to promote choice and competition in schooling is finally beginning to bear fruit. And leading politicians from both parties have embraced Friedman's teachings on the benefits of a low, flat-rate tax. Yet he is perhaps best known for having restored our understanding of the importance of money in general, and of predictable monetary rules in particular. "Substantial inflation is always and everywhere a monetary phenomenon," Friedman insists, and so are most "cyclical" gyrations in real output and employment. This compelling "monetarist" theme, backed by awesome research in collaboration with Anna Schwartz, David Meiselman, and others, was the first successful challenge to what had become an increasingly imperious Keynesian orthodoxy.

Money Mischief, by Milton Friedman (Harcourt, Brace, 274 pp., $19.95)

In 1960, Friedman launched a tentative proposal that central banks be required to keep money growing at "a relatively constant rate." Sympathetic critics have since come to believe that such a quantity rule has become difficult to enforce, because of such complications as defining and measuring money when you can write checks against all sorts of mutual funds. But Friedman was always far less dogmatic about this particular monetary rule than were some of his followers. "I should like to emphasize," he wrote in 1962, "that I do not regard my particular proposal as . . . a rule which is somehow to be written in tablets of stone and enshrined for a future time." At various times, Friedman has instead proposed requiring banks to hold 100 per cent reserves against deposits, or making currency convertible into an assortment of metals, or allowing competitive private banks to issue currency notes. In *Money Mischief*, he offers additional heresies in support of bimetalism (a combined gold–silver standard), or a limit on the gap in interest rates between indexed and non-indexed bonds, or a "unified" system in which a country with a weak currency essentially adopts the more credible money of another country. The unchanging theme underlying all of these reforms, though, is the importance of preventing the value of money from being determined by the whim of politicians and central bankers.

Alice Mooney

Since the publication of *Dollars and Deficits* in 1968, many of Friedman's unique reflections on money have been relatively inaccessible to the general reader, scattered as they are among a variety of technical books and articles. *Money Mischief* fills this void by carefully leading the reader through an explanation of how and why money matters. Concise exercises in theory are enlivened with real-world illustrations from U.S. and foreign history. We discover how a scheme to placate U.S. senators from silver-producing states helped to bring Communism to China, and why pegging exchange rates to the dollar worked quite well to stop inflation in Israel but not in Chile.

The opening explanation of "The Mystery of Money" is actually more rigorous than it seems, teaching more crucial concepts than many students retain after two college courses in money and banking. Yet the reader is seduced into learning by the author's familiar mastery of entertaining historical anecdotes and revealing graphs. Starting with stone money on the island of Yak, we are quickly led to understand what affects people's willingness to hold money for short or long periods, how real and nominal quantities of money differ, and how the perception of individuals about the delights of having more money clashes with what is actually possible for the entire economy and thus leads to monetary mischief.

Friedman, like many of us, has become far less skeptical about the merits of a commodity standard than he was when the U.S. severed its last links to gold in 1968–71. Subsequent experience with managed money has been a harsh teacher. As Friedman notes, "the fiat monetary system has been characterized by wide fluctuations in price levels, interest rates, and exchange rates." Back in the Sixties, the heyday of arrogant economics, we were taught that it was foolish for money-issuing authorities to commit themselves to holding a stock of gold and converting currency into yellow metal on demand. Wooden nickels would be better, because they are

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cheaper to produce. Friedman vanquished such cavalier notions in a scholarly journal a few years ago, observing that under a fiat money system citizens have to hold their own gold hoards as a hedge against inflation. "For millennia," Friedman now writes, "the only effective limit [on money] was provided by the link between money and a commodity. That link provided an anchor for the price level. . . . The verdict is far from in on whether fiat money will involve a lower cost than commodity money."

Our national attitudes toward gold or silver money continue to be shaped by vague misunderstandings of our history, particularly the events leading up to the "Cross of Gold" campaign of William Jennings Bryan in 1896. Bryan has long been a hero of U.S. history texts, while McKinley is depicted as a tool of Wall Street, and the voters as fools. Friedman revisits this period in several chapters, which read like a mystery novel. In 1873, the U.S. stopped treating the silver dollar as a coin with full legal-tender status, through a decision made without much reflection or debate. Had this "Crime of '73" not occurred, Friedman shows, the U.S. would have gone back to a commodity standard three years sooner, but it would have been a silver standard, not gold. "A silver standard almost surely would have avoided . . . the disturbed years from 1891 to 1897," he writes. It "would have greatly reduced the subsequent deflation in the United States and would have avoided the monetary and political agitation and uncertainty that the deflation produced."

This analysis puts Bryan in a more favorable light, and Friedman's revival of the long-forgotten case for bimetalism is masterly. However, it is not clear to this reviewer that the farm problems of the 1890s were entirely monetary in origin.

When writing about 1933, Friedman notes that "the farm lobby supported silver purchases partly because it favored any measure that would produce inflation and thereby raise the prices of farm products." That comment seems quite applicable to 1896 as well. But the farmers' political efforts on behalf of inflation in 1896 were not as defensible as in 1933, because the deflation of the early 1890s was not nearly as severe, and was largely concentrated in farm products.

Friedman argues that a relatively mild drop in prices in the 1890s, under the gold standard, was the sole cause of "a sharp retardation [of production] from something like 1892 to 1896." But he tells a quite different story when speaking of a much deeper greenback deflation from 1865 to 1878, when wholesale prices were cut in half. At that time, Friedman writes, "deflation did not prevent rapid economic growth. . . . On the contrary, rapid growth was the active force that produced the deflation." Big increases in supplies push prices down. Yet there were episodes of recession and growth in both the 1870s and 1890s, so it is not obvious why the deep deflation of the earlier period should be a matter of no concern, while the much milder deflation of the 1890s should be considered a disaster that justified scrapping the entire monetary regime. By one index, Simon Kuznets's GNP deflator, prices fell by only 10 per cent from 1893 to 1896, and some other measures indicate an even less steep drop. Furthermore, on Kuznets's estimate, real GNP rose by nearly 7 per cent in the same period. The political problem was falling farm prices, not a prolonged industrial depression; and there were real forces at work here, such as global trade wars and bumper crops, not just a shortage of gold. Even today, corn prices frequently rise and fall relative to gold. But that is not necessarily an indictment of gold, or a justification for inflation.

Thanks to Christina Romer's new monthly index of industrial production, we know that the only serious drop in manufacturing output in the 1892–96 period was during late 1892 and early 1893. It is the drop in farm prices, not urban unemployment, that led to Bryan's promise to make money rain upon the nation's farms. Farm production did not fall in the years leading up to 1896, but instead soared. Indeed, huge increases in the supply of grain and cotton are at least part of the explanation of why farm prices fell far more rapidly than prices of nonfarm goods. The huge increase in agricultural output also explains why the primitive old indexes of U.S. wholesale prices for the 1890s, constructed from newspaper reports on raw commodities, appear to indicate a more rapid fall than in Britain, where farm goods accounted for a smaller share of the index. It is hard to believe that U.S. and British deflation rates for traded goods really differed for several years, since both countries were on the same gold standard.

Despite such quibbles, there is no question that Friedman's meticulous re-examination of this turning point in U.S. history has much to teach us. Personally, my own urban bias is still toward McKinley and gold in 1896, despite his nasty 1890 tariff law, but then I'm fond of Coolidge, too. On the other hand, Friedman's case for keeping the silver dollar back in 1873 is quite enticing. Just imagine how little inflation we would have had in recent years if a silver dollar could still be bought for a paper dollar.

This is another in a long series of trail-blazing books by Milton Friedman. How often do we get a chance to read something new from one of the half-dozen most influential economists who ever lived? *Money Mischief* will enthrall anyone interested in money or history, which ought to include just about everyone. □

Civilization and Its Malcontents

JOSEPH ADELSON

WHY in the world did E. Fuller Torrey write this book? He is one of our best psychiatrists. He wrote a wonderful book about Ezra Pound's psychiatric incarceration, and more recently a pioneering work on homelessness. He has been a trenchant critic of the "poverty causes everything" theory of psychological disturbance and more generally of the reflexive environmentalism which continues to dominate psychol-

Freudian Fraud: The Malignant Effects of Freud's Theory in American Thought and Culture, by E. Fuller Torrey, MD (HarperCollins, 362 pp., $25)

Mr. Adelson is professor of psychology at the University of Michigan.

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ogy. And now this!—a temper tantrum attacking a semi-mythical entity called "Freudianism," so offensive at moments as to offend even those of us long disenchanted with the psychoanalytic orthodoxy.

There is something about Freud that can unhinge otherwise able minds, and even great ones. Vladimir Nabokov would every now and again let loose with some extravagant insult, lashing out at that "Viennese quack," "the witchdoctor Freud." My own interest in Freud was kindled by a teacher of freshman English who was given to explosions of anti-Freud outrage. His otherwise conventional survey of the canon would be interrupted, out of the blue, by a fierce denunciation of the man he termed "the sex fiend."

Torrey brings two major charges against psychoanalysis. First, that it is not truly scientific, but the wild concoction of an erratic and at times disordered mind. Second, that it has (nevertheless) swept all before it in this country, capturing the allegiance of intellectuals, social scientists, educators, publishers, pediatricians, psychiatrists and psychologists, entertainers, and so on, influencing almost all aspects of American thought and behavior to destructive effect. Almost no sector of our life has gone untouched: how we raise our children, care for the mentally ill, make movies, treat prisoners, publish books, manage the universities. Almost everything that has gone wrong—up to and including Willie Horton's furlough (really)—can be traced to the influence of Freud, more specifically to the unholy alliance between psychoanalysis and the Left.

To make his case for its pervasiveness Torrey employs a very loose definition of "Freudianism." It is a vast carapace under which we find everything from the modestly psychodynamic to such bizarre extensions as Wilhelm Reich's orgone theory. Much the same can be said of Torrey's treatment of politics: anything from the most pallid liberalism to the wilder shores of anarchism to the deification of Pol Pot counts you as an adherent of the Left. Furthermore it counts you forever. Thus Lionel Trilling, one of our most profound critics of liberalism, is placed on the Left because of views he held very early in his career.

But that is a venial sin. The book hits bottom in its persistent use of sexual and other gossip to explain why certain ideas were attractive to Torrey's intellectual adversaries, above all Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, Benjamin Spock, and Karl Menninger. Miss Mead was an energetic bisexual and we are told at great length about her many marriages and affairs; thus she was interested in both psychoanalysis and cultural relativism as a means of justifying her own behavior. Miss Benedict was homosexual and had the same motive. Dr. Spock, on the other hand, is heterosexual and monogamous, but—he had a domineering mother, which explains *his* views. Dr. Menninger was neurotic and an adulterer and also had a dominating mother, which takes care of him. It is a game one cannot lose. If Miss Mead had been virginal rather than sexually active, that would also account for her fascination with sexuality. If Dr. Spock's mother had been neglectful rather than controlling, that would serve equally well as an explanation of his errors. What is extraordinary is that this mode of analysis mimics the most vulgar forms of psychoanalytic biography, which Torrey condemns elsewhere.

His animus spoils his case even when he is right. He is right to argue that psychoanalysis fails as a science; but then no one of any sophistication has thought otherwise for at least a generation. A powerful literature has been developed which shows just how and why it fails. Much of this work has been by psychoanalysts in good standing, but their writings seem to have escaped Torrey's attention.

Indeed most philosophers of science, including such giants as Paul Meehl, no longer believe that the social sciences in general are as "scientific" as the hard sciences, or that they will become so in the foreseeable future. The variables are too many, and too hard to measure and to isolate. (By the way, that was also Hayek's position.) Freud's genius was in discovering new things to look for, particularly the traces of childhood experience in the inner life of adults. Note Torrey's own use of "the controlling mother" as a way of understanding Spock and Menninger. Where does he think that idea came from?

Hidden in these pages is the book Torrey might have written were he not so determined to demonize Freud. It would be useful to know just how and why psychoanalysis was so easily inducted into the service of American utopianism. Torrey depicts psychoanalysis as a co-conspirator, claiming that its environmentalism lent itself naturally enough to reformist and egalitarian politics. Yet Freud was a political conservative, who scorned the idea of human perfectibility. Nor was his theory environmentalist, as Torrey argues. He saw human development as the unfolding of a universal biological timetable. Frank Sulloway's brilliant analysis of Freud's doctrine establishes beyond doubt how deeply biological it was.

In his biography of Freud, Ernest Jones tells how he, Jones, reported on the dream theory to a meeting of American psychologists in 1909, at a time when Freud was essentially unknown in this country. A woman in the audience rose and said indignantly that while Viennese dreams seemed egoistic, American dreams were altruistic. Freud found this vastly amusing, but we can see in it now an uncanny prophecy of the way our nation would absorb his theory—touching it up, smoothing the rough edges, brightening the dark spots, preparing it for its place in the procession of uplift reaching from Rousseau to today's radical egalitarianism. □

The Intelligence Gap

RALPH DE TOLEDANO

IT WAS Henry L. Stimson, then Franklin Roosevelt's secretary of war, who uttered the classic reproach against intelligence services: "Gentlemen do not read each other's mail." This did not deter Naval Intelligence from breaking the Japanese code—a major factor in the stunning U.S. sea victories in the Pacific. But that accomplishment aside, U.S. intelligence operations in the twentieth century have hardly been brilliant.

Mr. Toledano is an NR *contributing editor.*

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The problem with assessing the intelligence record of the United States is that a cottage industry of reportage and fiction, full of sweeping cloaks, flashing daggers, and tiptoeing feet in the dark, has given Americans a distorted and somewhat ludicrous picture. We know a great deal about the Soviet Union's successful spies—the Philby–Burgess–Maclean group, Richard Sorge, the Rosenbergs, Walter Krivitsky—but our matching roster seems limited to Nathan Hale. Meanwhile such CIA "coups" as the "defection" and subsequent re-defection of Vitaly Yurchenko have left egg all over CIA's face.

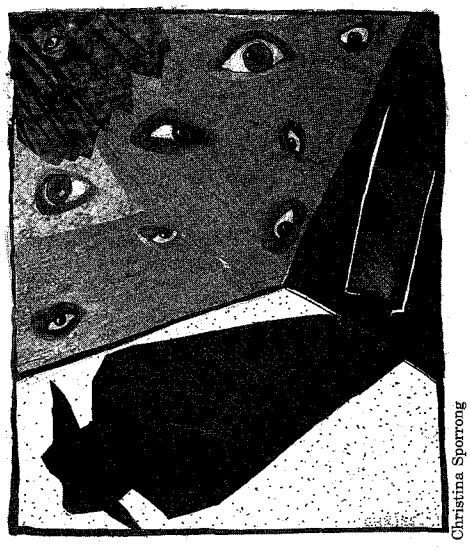
Of three new books on intelligence, only one, Angelo Codevilla's *Informing Statecraft*, is of value. The also-rans are *The Spy Who Saved the World*, by Jerrold L. Schechter and Peter S. Deriabin, and *The Old Boys*, by Burton Hersh. Schechter–Deriabin's savior spy is Oleg Penkovsky, a mid-level Soviet official who may or may not have been a double agent when he purportedly was delivering secrets to CIA and MI-6, bargaining always for more money. There is some unintended humor in the book's account of Penkovsky stopping tourists in the street and in hotel lobbies to ask them to convey to the British or the Americans his desire to work for their secret services. But even if the Schechter–Deriabin story is accurate, the claim that Penkovsky "saved the world" is nowhere substantiated. And as a tale of derring-do, it falls as flat as the style of its writing.

The Spy Who Saved the World: How a Soviet Colonel Changed the Course of the Cold War, by Jerrold L. Schechter and Peter S. Deriabin (Scribner's, 488 pp., $25)

The Old Boys: The American Elite and the Origins of the CIA, by Burton Hersh (Scribner's, 576 pp., $29.95)

Informing Statecraft: Intelligence for a New Century, by Angelo Codevilla (Free Press, 491 pp., $24.95)

The same cannot be said of Burton Hersh's hyperbolic use of the *mot injuste* and his hilarious malapropisms, such as describing the furnishings of Georgetown homes as *billets-doux*. John Foster Dulles is characterized as a lover of Nazis, with "heart-stopping sour breath." Toward facts, *The Old Boys* takes roughly the same approach as the *Confidential* series published in the 1950s by Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer. For example, it has Connecticut Avenue in Washington, D.C., running through Georgetown—as neat a trick as discovering the Champs-Elysées somewhere on the Left Bank. Its accounts of OSS and CIA operations are also peppered with embarrassing misstatements, but I will cite only one of which I have inside knowledge—the Guatemala campaign which broke the



Christina Sporrong

Communist hold on that country. Hersh confesses that his account of the anti-Communist coup in Guatemala is based on a book so propagandistic that only the Left took it seriously. Hersh described Jacobo Arbenz, the Communizing president who was overthrown, as a well-meaning liberal. He dismisses Carlos Castillo Armas, the leader of the coup, as a "mestizo," and his supporters as working-class "debris." And Jack Peurifoy, the American ambassador, is accused—falsely—of earlier having betrayed the State Department by delivering the Alger Hiss security file to congressional investigators.

In contrast to Hersh's compendium of fancy and malice, there is Codevilla's *Informing Statecraft*—a thoughtful, insightful, and richly informed study of the nature and function of intelligence. Here is no collection of exposés of U.S. intelligence activities. Codevilla is more interested in examining the principles of intelligence, and he does so by dividing his book into three parts. The first "explains what intelligence is, and what happens to states that have good intelligence and those that don't." The second part demonstrates our lack of understanding of those principles, and shows that the U.S. acted "with little thought of matching what we *could* do to what we *had* to do." The third part breaks down the elements of intelligence and tells us what works and what doesn't, and why.

Codevilla stresses that intelligence cannot replace responsible policymaking. The essential function of intelligence is to help government arrive at an understanding of the characteristics of putative enemies and current friends, of their histories and national psychologies. Cloak-and-daggery attempting to gauge the performance of Soviet weaponry has cost billions, but one captured Soviet tank turned over to us by the Israelis was of greater value than all the microfilm delivered by CIA agents.

The CIA failed so signally to report accurately on the Soviet Union because those it employed to interpret mountains of data frequently had come no closer to that country than a Harvard Russian Studies course. Long after the impending collapse of the Soviet economy was more than a *mene mene tekel upharsin* on the Kremlin wall, the CIA was insisting on its soundness. When it was clear that Gorbachev could not survive, CIA was still counseling President Bush to prop him up and to jettison Boris Yeltsin. In Moscow, Bush brushed aside the Ukrainian independence movement, describing it as mere "local despotism." In this, of course, he was pursuing the same kind of determined CIA ignorance that he had shown as its director when he informed Congress, at a time when millions were on the verge of starvation, that there was "no malnutrition in China."

The cessation of the cold war has led to some clamor from economizers and from subscribers to Henry Stimson's dictum that the U.S. should drastically curtail intelligence operations, perhaps even shutting down CIA. This is not Codevilla's purpose. What is needed is systematic reform, perhaps returning to the Pentagon the purely military aspects of the intelligence mission. Such effective reform will require a smaller, tougher, more expert CIA, less interested in empire-building and interoffice vendettas and more

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interested in assessment of political and economic information. For this it will need neither cloak nor dagger nor an 007 license number. □

America Narcotica

PAUL WEST

CLOCKERS arives with a press kit, a cardboard folder that might have held silk stockings; raises on its first page a non-literary matter: agent Lynn Nesbit's legs, "the best," says Liz Smith, "in the literary business." Then you learn how much Richard Price likes toughness, and how much Martin Scorsese paid him for the screen rights. Get it straight: this is a self-consciously hard-driving guy who nonetheless, in an earlier novel, could write something as awkwardly delicate as "Everything still had that post-rain placental shimmer to it, enhanced by the deepening slant of the late afternoon sun."

Clockers, by Richard Price (Houghton Mifflin, 599 pp., $22.95)

Mr. Price is not averse to patches of purple, even in *Clockers*, a long novel in which he seeks to probe the soft core of certain tough guys; what Mr. Price needs is an appropriate language that would let him reveal the pathos, poignancy, the distortions of ingrown tenderness, and without sentimentality. In other words, he needs to do the job without such clichés as the drug dealer who goes straight and the disaffected cop whose sense of mission is restored. Because his touch is didactic, Mr. Price does not pull it off—he is too simplistic an explainer—but he does draw a gritty and believable picture of his milieu, in this case a futureless dump called Dempsy, N.J.

Someone once asked me, as people do ask, where to go for material to write about, and I answered, "Go to those who have no hope." Mr. Price did that, much as he did earlier in *The Wanderers* (1974), plunging himself into the world of New Jersey crack dens (whereas for *The Wanderers* he had to do no such research; he had come from the Bronx housing project he wrote about). *Clockers* evinces his courage and his slithering empathy, and anyone wanting an in-depth vision of America Narcotica need look no farther than his novel.

Mr. Price knows both his dealers and his cops, although he tends to look at them with an almost morality-play simplicity; he knows what they stand for more than he understands them, and he rarely, as a novelist should, sweeps us into the dankest, most miserable crannies of his people, speaking for those who cannot speak for themselves. In other words, he takes no chances and so achieves a middling realism rather than a devastating vision.

His two main characters, Strike Dunham, a black 19-year-old crack dealer with an ulcer, and Rocco Klein, an almost burnt-out case of a homicide cop, suck a lot of energy from Mr. Price and between them create a force-field in which the lives of almost everyone can plausibly go awry. Strike's boss is a niggling psychotic millionaire. Someone bumps off one of the boss's people and Victor, Strike's good-guy brother, confesses to the crime. At this point, Rocco Klein begins to take a developed interest in Strike, convinced that Victor is covering for him; so he frames Strike as a stoolie and hangs him out to dry. In the end, when Klein's baby vanishes and the hitman after Strike dwindles away with AIDS, Strike turns to the now thoroughly animated cop for help.

It's a neat enough contraption, one-third misery, one-third bristling dialogue, one-third homily. In his bald, movie-oriented way, Mr. Price is as dogmatic as E. M. Forster. Strike thrives on power and status, Klein on risk and glamor. My problem with them is that, without an Al Pacino and a Paul Newman to flesh them out, I wonder if readers will remember them. Already they are fading from my own memory, and I begin to suspect they are only temporary, proxy types occupying space for another art form whose lights blaze brighter than fiction's. Written words are not this fable's final resting place in spite of its streamlined teacherly fiber, the density of its research, the street-smart twitch that never quits.

In one of its least humdrum efforts, C-SPAN recently set up cameras next to a line of outdoor barbers in a Hanoi street and filmed whatever happened: a kind of hands-off mass reportage that made the idea of Hanoi solid and casual. It did the same for a backwater street in a Hanoi suburb, allowing whole minutes of no action, no movement at all. Mr. Price does something similar for Dempsy, reminding us that his skill is not literary at all, but optical, clerical, anecdotal. He's more like Frank Norris with a degree in labor relations. What he really needs is a TV show. □

Mr. West's most recent novel is The Women of Whitechapel and Jack the Ripper. *His next one,* Love's Mansion, *is due in September from Random House.*

LITERARY POLITICS

Ghost Writer

JAMES BOWMAN

"THE TIME has been," said Macbeth, "that, when the brains were out, the man would die, and there an end." But, as he found out when Banquo's ghost came back to push him from his stool, it's a funny old world. Likewise, though Communism has sustained at least twenty mortal murthers on its crown, its shade still haunts us. Various fashionable and politically correct Doppelgängers, from environmentalism to radical feminism, shake their gory locks at us in reminder that there are still those who want political power in order to try to change human nature.

In the old days such people might have been called fellow-travelers by the Right and "useful idiots" by the Communists themselves for furthering

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their agenda without wearing their uniform. But what do we call them today? They are "useful" only to themselves and the spirit of chaos, and they cannot be fellow-travelers now that their Communist traveling companion has expired. So, rather than calling them idiots *tout court* (why poison the wells of dialogue?), or solo-travelers, I propose re-christening them Mitgängers.

Not only is this an approximate German translation of "fellow-travelers," it also does homage to the man who is the Greyfriars Bobby of the American Left, faithful to his master even beyond death. A careful study of the works of Herbert Mitgang, book re-

Bonnie Gardner

viewer for the daily *New York Times* (thus among the nation's five or six most powerful critics) and author of such books as *Dangerous Dossiers: Exposing the Secret War against America's Greatest Authors*, will teach us all we need to know about that curious phenomenon: fellow-traveling in the post-Communist era.

The first thing to notice about the Mitgänger is that he invariably describes himself as a "liberal." It is typical of his conceit that it takes this name for the universal tendency of American politics as its partisan label, and for a philosophy that is in many respects decidedly illiberal. The second thing to notice is that "liberal" in the mouth of the Mitgänger is approximately equivalent to "decent."

Mitgang himself, in a recent review of a book called *God and Other Famous Liberals* (whose title is itself a classic example of Mitgängery) by the son of the late Senator Frank Church, approvingly quoted the author as saying that everything needful for the "new liberal agenda" may be found in President Roosevelt's message to Congress of January 6, 1941. He has said that "the foundations of a healthy and strong democracy" require only a few simple things:

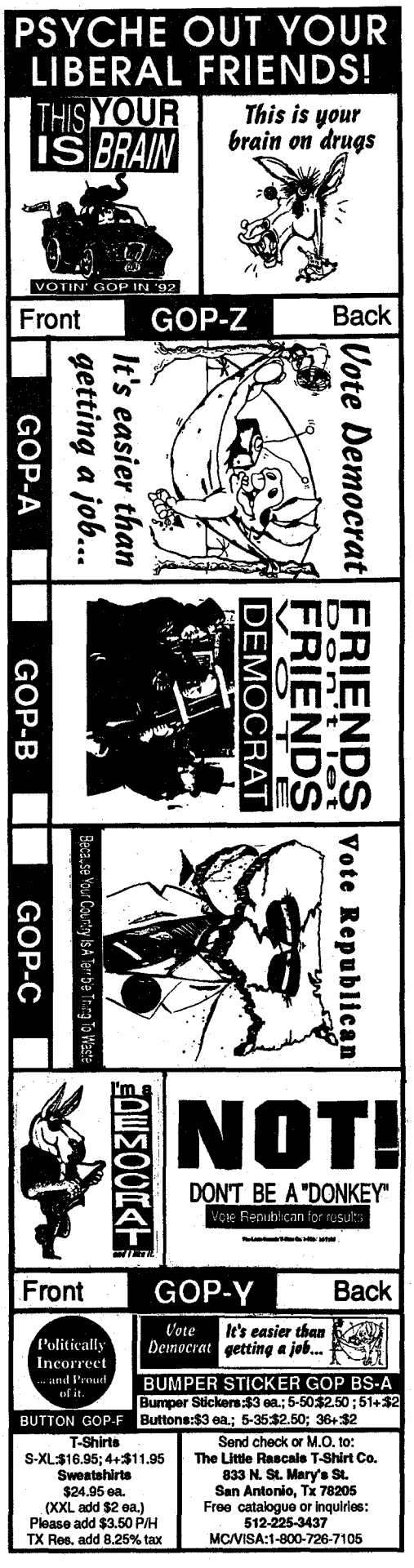
> Equality of opportunity for youth and others; jobs for those who can work; security for those who need it; the ending of special privilege for the few; the preservation of civil liberties for all, and the enjoyment of the fruits of scientific progress in a wider and constantly rising standard of living.

Mitgang imagines that "neither liberals nor conservatives would dare to speak this openly during the 1992 campaign" because "any candidate who did so might be accused of using the 'dangerous' L word."

Only a liberal of the Mitgänger variety could imagine that such a collection of platitudes was daringly liberal; only a liberalism-as-decency man could suppose that the hope for such things was limited to people like himself. Thus Mitgang, in a review of a biography of Archibald MacLeish, quotes approvingly from a letter MacLeish wrote to J. Edgar Hoover, who was quite properly keeping him and his pinko friends under surveillance: "Don't you think it would be a good thing if all investigators could be made to understand that liberalism is not only not a crime but actually the attitude of the President of the United States and the greater part of his Administration?"

Of course to the Mitgänger the cold war is a big non-event, a charade, a bit of American paranoia. He is the sort of person for whom Helen Gahagan Douglas is a heroine ("a valiant woman," said Mitgang in a review of a recent biography of her). Conversely, during the Nixon–Douglas senatorial campaign of 1950, "Liberalism and Communism were equated by the pro-Nixon forces"—clearly an incredible faux pas to the man who regularly equates Liberalism with Decency.

Note that to the Mitgänger, however, it is axiomatic that there never was a Communist threat—even now that there are no longer any Communists to exculpate. Mitgang's own book on the FBI, *Dangerous Dossiers*, is based on that certainty and finds occasion on almost every page to ridicule the U.S. security agencies for taking



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an interest in subversion. Likewise, in his reviews he praises books such as Fred Inglis's *The Cruel Peace: Everyday Life in the Cold War* for their "dazzling writing" and their "challenging" ideas (such as that the cold war put off the day when socialism would smash capitalism and produce "a more cooperative world"), while he damns absolutely Paul Hollander's *Anti-Americanism* as "undisguised neoconservative cheerleading."

What Hollander's book actually is, among other things, is a straightforward catalogue of the ways in which the left-wing social agenda masquerades as news or entertainment. To the staunch Mitgänger, pointing this out is exactly like looking for Reds under the beds. To Hollander's unremarkable suggestion that Walter Cronkite brought "well-worn left-of-center political attitudes" to the reporting of the news, Mitgang feigns astonishment: "Walter Cronkite, the most trusted anchor in television history? Say it isn't so, Professor! Not Uncle Walter!"

To Mitgang there is no left-wing agenda to American "self-criticism," in the same way as there used to be no Communist threat to American security. In a review of Curt Gentry's *J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets*, he does not fail to notice that Ronald Reagan was an FBI informant "to report on fellow actors who followed 'the Communist Party line,'" enclosing the last phrase in quotation marks as if to say that the Communist Party, if it even existed, could not possibly have had anything so political as a line.

Reagan, of course, is a favorite whipping boy anyway and is lashed again and again in Mitgang's reviews, albeit with the mercifully woundless scourge of cliché. Each and every Reagan cliché turns up in the Mitgang *œuvre* sooner or later. Sometimes this assault upon Reagan is just an approving report on one of the liberal political books that Mitgang reviews, such as James MacGregor Burns' and Stewart Burns's book on the Bill of Rights called *A People's Charter*, in which, says Mitgang, "the authors make it clear that it was not simply social goals that came under assault in the 1980s; the Bill of Rights itself became a target of opportunity." Sometimes it makes a gratuitous appearance in, say, his review of a novel:

> There's something as American as today's business pages about the catalyst behind *Strong Motion*: how a large company pollutes the earth, endangers people's lives, suppresses whistle blowers, and covers up its activities to keep its greedy executives in corporate clover.

It is in this book that (naturally) "one of the few sympathetic personalities" says that "for eight years we had a U.S. President with subnormal intelligence." Now, how might we have guessed that of all the words in the novel (maybe upward of 150,000 of them) these would be the ones to be quoted by Mitgang? Give your reasons in essay form.

Elsewhere, he is even more outspoken about President Bush and his attitude toward blacks: "After all, George Bush, in effect, employed Willie Horton as his campaign manager and was rewarded with the Presidency." This is not a political opinion; it is another statement of the liberalism-as-decency credo of the Mitgänger. Even the right of black people to commit crimes seems to be sacrosanct. Mitgang treats Bush in exactly the same way he accuses Bush of treating Willie Horton: as an example of moral turpitude bordering on the subhuman with which a whole class of people—blacks in the case of Willie Horton, Bush voters in the case of the President—are to be associated.

Now you might think that if you were in the business of making a devil to frighten us with, a rapist would be more promising material than a conservative, or would-be conservative, law-and-order President. Not a bit of it! To the Mitgänger, you can lay *anything* to the charge of the conservative, which also makes him a convenient hook on which to hang the liberal cause of the week. In a recent review of a book about *FDR's Movie-maker*, Pare Lorentz, he managed to do this quite neatly:

> In the light of the current harassment of creative artists and performers by political watchdogs, including those who would dismantle public television, the Lorentz memoir serves to recall that the Federal Government was a fountainhead of financial support and encouragement for the arts during the New Deal era.

Sometimes the connection is not so neat, however. My favorite example of the Mitgang nonsequitur is his use of Clarence Thomas last autumn to hint darkly at—well, at what? He was re-

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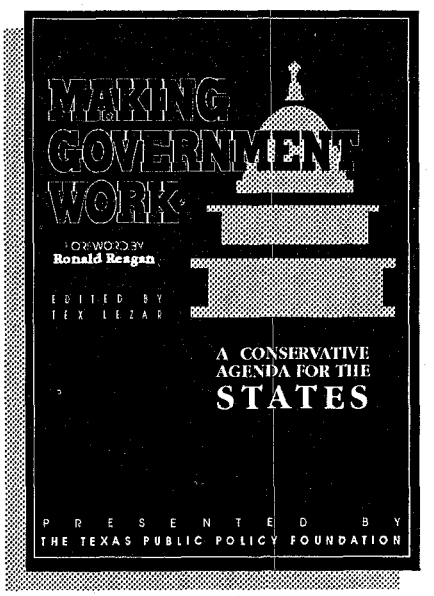
President Ronald Reagan

...because the book is about ideas..it attains a rare importance...
Sen. Phil Gramm

Distinguished authors and timely subjects...a very useful volume.
William Bennett

a bold call to arms...
Jack Kemp



MAKING GOVERNMENT WORK:
A CONSERVATIVE AGENDA FOR THE STATES
FOREWORD BY RONALD REAGAN
Edited by Tex Lezar
Presented by
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viewing the trendy *Reader's Companion to American History*, in which the authors tell us that younger historians no longer believe in American exceptionalism, and Mitgang adds: "After watching the recent confirmation free-for-all for a new Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, the book seems prescient about Washington's lost exceptionalism." There you have it, folks: Clarence Thomas, the man who reduced America to a nation like other nations.

Clearly, everything is grist for Mitgang's mill. He can take the occasion of a review of Robert Massie's *Dreadnought: Britain, Germany, and the Coming of the Great War* to chide Massie for not being Barbara Tuchman, since Miss Tuchman is better at conveying "a clear impression of the folly of war." Then he can find in the collected writings of Aung San Suu Kye, the heroine of the Burmese revolution, evidence that "the familiar phrase 'law and order'—a longtime favorite of officeholders and of political candidates in many countries, including our own," is "code words," presumably for political oppression—as if the violent official suppression of dissent by the (socialist) Burmese tyrants were quite the same thing as catching and punishing muggers and rapists.

When even the keeping of the civil peace is seen as politically provocative, it is safe to say that we are in the spooky shadow-land of the Mitgänger, the fellow-traveler who has nowhere to travel to, the idiot who is no longer useful to anybody but who goes on being idiotic by reflex, or in the zombie-like trance of those who are dead and don't know it. This is the specter at our post-Communist feast; let us hope that it is not a portent of evil days to come. □

FILM

Batman and Girls at Bat

JOHN SIMON

THERE IS something disturbingly infantile about a society in which the summer's most touted, opulent, breathlessly awaited movie is ***Batman Returns***. This piece of goods has just about everything against it a movie can have. Not only is it based on comic books, but also it is a sequel: two queasy genres in one. It was directed by a loutish director, Tim Burton, who specializes in films for children. (Backward ones, at that.) And even as comic strips go, Bob Kane's *Batman* was particularly primitive. But what is especially shaming for our culture is the critical acclaim this trash has garnered.

In this sequel, which I consider visually undernourished and inferior even to the original, there is neither a well-defined plot line nor an antagonist as funny and formidable as Jack Nicholson's Joker. The protagonist, Batman, in private life the befuddled billionaire Bruce Wayne, lacked much personality in either guise in the first film; in the sequel, he seems more pallid yet, both in and out of costume, which

Alan Nahigian

makes him a quadruple loser. In *Batman Returns*, he is no longer pitted against one solid villain, but against a flimsier and confusing two and a half: the Trumpishly greedy entrepreneur Max Shreck; the malformed ornithoid mobster from the literal underground (the sewers), the Penguin; and Catwoman, of whom he and we cannot even be certain whether she is an opponent.

Uncertainty here does not make for creative ambiguity, but for wishy-washiness. When they doff their bathood and cathood, Bruce and Selina Kyle are by way of becoming lovers, yet the movie cannot even make up its feeble mind about whether they recognize each other under their disguise. The plot crumbles before our eyes as Catwoman plays cat and mouse with Max, and cat and bird with the Penguin; and as the Penguin starts giving his co-conspirator Shreck the shaft. Intricacy does not thrive in such a simplistic setting, which cries out for one good knock-down, drag-out contest.

Add to this that either the main characters fall flat or the actors portraying them are poorly cast. Both the Penguin and Catwoman survive death in the same, even cartoonily, unconvincing way. The former, born Oswald Cobblepot, was flushed into the sewer by his parents and raised by an unlikely colony of penguins escaped from the zoo. The latter, *née* Selina Kyle, was Shreck's incomparably dowdy but dedicated secretary. Yet the vile and thankless Max defenestrates her, one awning proving enough to break her fall from empyrean heights, whereupon an improbable cluster of cats licks our ailurophile back to life. As if that weren't enough, she sews herself a cat suit out of an old black slicker, and promptly becomes not only sleek and sexy, but also able to perform the most prodigious series of backflips. And outside her cat suit, she is a gorgeous, exquisitely groomed and gowned young woman—in fact, Michelle Pfeiffer.

This Catwoman, moreover, has literally nine lives, when even James Bond only had 007. And whereas it makes some sense for the misshapen Penguin to hate mankind, there is no evidence that Selina was maltreated by any man other than her boss; at worst, she was a wallflower, which hardly justifies her all-out war against men, even if it may fit in with an era of unleashed radical feminism. And just why did the righteous hero become a proto-bat? Surely, Superman was a more glamorous creature. In a recent TV interview, Bob Kane said he got the idea from Mary Roberts Rinehart's play *The Bat*. If, instead, he had chanced on *The Wings of the Dove*, would our hero have become Pigeon-man?

Actually, Michael Keaton *is* a kind

Mr. Simon, NR's film critic, is also theater critic for New York *magazine.*

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of pouter pigeon. And under his high, narrow, curl-topped forehead, the lower half of his face—the one the bat mask leaves exposed—is puffy and soft, making his head look like an overripe pear. His acting ability, on the other hand, remains fully hidden, in both costume and business suit. As for the Penguin, played by the unprepossessing Danny DeVito, he is not scary: not even when eyeing Catwoman lecherously does he endow his beak with the properly phallic menace. Nor does he have the charm that Burgess Meredith, the previous incumbent, brought to the role.

Christopher Walken is an interesting actor who definitely knows how to be a threatening presence. But his Queens accent, however reminiscent of Donald Trump's, merely suggests a small-time chiseler, and his Paderewskian wig makes him look too much like a piano virtuoso to terrify anything but a keyboard. And Miss Pfeiffer? She comes closest to making an impression, but as the writing (by Daniel Waters and Sam Hamm) fudges her moral status, she does not have a clear persona to play.

As the film progresses, it becomes ever sloppier. Finally it is no more than an orgy of naughty brats destroying everything in sight. Things and people collide, collapse, ravage one another, and blow up in such quick profusion that the violence melts together into an amorphous mess, something like a twenty-minute multiple-car crash. You don't know who did what to whom. And at the end, the obvious opening for another sequel glares at us like a pair of missing front teeth.

In the *Times*, Janet Maslin calls *BR* an often "unexpectedly droll creation," but the lines she adduces as witty (e.g., Selina to Max, "How can you be so mean to someone so meaningless?"; Catwoman to the Penguin, "I wouldn't touch you to scratch you!"; Catwoman to the world, "Life's a bitch; now so am I!"; an image consultant to the Penguin, "Not a lot of reflective surfaces down in the sewer, huh?") fall between balloons—the comic-strip and the lead kind. Miss Maslin's colleague, Caryn James, goes even farther in her Sunday piece: "With the sneakiness and impact of a sucker punch, this wildly witty and inventive adventure taps into the confused Zeitgeist of the moment." And she proceeds to draw elaborate parallels between, among others, the Penguin and Ross Perot.

Most bizarre, though, is the praise Terrence Rafferty heaps on the movie in *The New Yorker*. A true heir of Pauline Kael, he extols anything that he considers "liberating" trash. Thus he praises (or raises?) Kane for "successfully plying his not entirely reputable trade" in the "law-of-the-jungle areas of the imagination," and lauds the movie for "respect[ing] the arbitrariness, the sheer out-of-the-blue berserkness of Kane's conception." Again: "The genius [*sic*] of Burton's approach to Batman was that it reveled in impurity, celebrated the anything-goes recklessness of comic-book art [*sic*], and made that quality seem as beautiful—as *right*, in its way—as the honed, shapely power of the most affecting fairy tales."

Kane, Rafferty speculates, may have found his "weird conviction . . . deep in the Batcave of his unconscious, as a disguised acknowledgment of the necessary unscrupulousness of his own artistic kind." And congenial Tim Burton responded by finding in himself "the delightfully unwholesome qualities that make a great popular artist." The yearning for subversion in these well-fed bourgeois reviewers is remarkable—as is the assumption that this great popular art (for which read successfully crowd-pleasing schlock) really has the purposiveness and power to subvert anything. But the protégés of Miss Kael, the so-called Paulettes, multiply in the catacombs of criticism. Some sewers abound in reflective surfaces.

■ No better a film is the less cartoony but just as trashy ***A League of Their Own***, which the studio first shelved as unmarketable. Crass as those studio bosses may be, even they have higher standards than our critics and audiences. This piece of sentimental claptrap, shabbily written by Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel, derivatively directed by Penny Marshall, and anthologizing every cliché of the run-of-the-mill sports picture, seems well on the way to becoming a blockbuster.

During World War II, when it appeared that too many baseball players would be drafted, a women's league was started in three Midwestern states. Eliciting laughter and sneers

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at first, women's baseball, played with real professionalism, caught on, and coexisted with men's baseball for some dozen years. The screenplay revolves around two sisters: comely Dottie, her parents' favorite, married to a fighting GI, and a terrific catcher and hitter in local softball skirmishes; and Kit, her tomboyish kid sister, a fine pitcher who freezes at bat, partly because of her general inferiority complex vis-à-vis her beautiful elder sister. But Dottie cares for her, agreeing to try out for the All American Girls Professional Baseball League only if Kit is given an equal chance.

We get the usual bromides about the recruiting and training of the young women, from raw rookies (or cookies) into greathearted players. They have to take charm-school courses, wear cutesy uniforms, put up with apathetic management and a hostile press, not to mention a perfectly beastly coach, Jimmy Dugan (Tom Hanks). A former ace, he ruined his career through booze and a concomitant accident that permanently wrecked his knees. The movie follows his team, the Rockford Peaches, where, besides Dottie and Kit, we get the randy ex-taxi-dancer "All-the-way" Mae (Madonna, in one of her more restrained showings), along with the usual assortment of other beloved commonplaces of the genre.

Imagine, the movie even starts with Dottie as a middle-aged mother reluctantly yielding to her daughter as she lets herself be persuaded to travel to Cooperstown, where the Peaches are to be inducted into baseball's Hall of Fame. And it ends, after telling its tale in a flashback, with the tear-drenched and tear-jerking reunion of the survivors. But the climax comes when the sisters, by now both stars but playing on opposing teams in the crucial game (for contrived reasons I won't go into) face off with results only slightly less predictable than the sum of two and two.

Dugan, the misogynistic coach, urinates in front of his players and refuses to coach them; during games, he gets drunk and sleeps in the dugout. Needless to say, he is brought to his senses later, but by that time even the most callous team owner would have fired him. And, equally needless to say, there is a platonic romance between Dugan and Dottie that chastely ends when her hubby returns from the war. And . . . but aren't you crying uncle by now? *A League of Their Own* belongs in a class not quite its own—a rather huge one known as rubbish. □

ART

A House for Humans

JAMES GARDNER

WHETHER descending the ramp of the old Guggenheim or struggling up the ramp of the new, one feels like a cross between Sisyphus and a pinball. Frank Lloyd Wright's masterpiece may indeed be a joy to look at, but it is hell to inhabit: the spiraling rotundity of the main structure wearies the limbs as it baffles the mind. Notwithstanding its much publicized reopening after two years of expansion and renovation, the Guggenheim remains entirely unsuited to our species in the present state of evolution.

On the outside all is well enough. The original museum, which had entered its fourth decade looking somewhat frowzy, is once again pristine. A new building, designed by Gwathmey, Siegel and Associates, rises up beside it, with cream-colored surfaces patterned into a delicately detailed grid. If anything, by concealing the buildings behind the museum, this new ensemble creates a more satisfying resolution than before.

If architecture, like sculpture, had only to occupy space rather than to contain it for human use, no one could deny the success of either building. But architecture is required to do more. Wright's interior, confusing to begin with, has just become several times more so. Heretofore you only had to contend with that punishing spiral, partially mitigated by three horizontal spaces along the way. Now the adjoining spaces proliferate and spoil the manic single-mindedness of Wright's plan. And while it is surely

Mr. Gardner writes frequently about art for NR *and other publications.*

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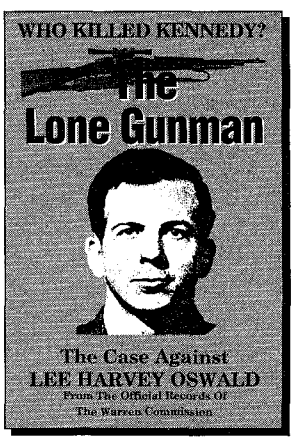

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good that more of the museum's extensive holdings can be displayed to the public, the new low-ceilinged spaces are ill-suited to their purpose. They are somber on even the brightest days, and each floor has at least one narrow loop where the guards have to direct traffic lest visitors harm one another in passing.

Perhaps the best that can be said for these new galleries is that you may never find them. Such is the wooziness of Wright's structure that some of the larger rooms remain empty, their existence unsuspected, while tiny side-rooms fill up with people who have no idea of the smallness of the space they are about to enter. And once inside it is too late: others, in similar ignorance, are pressing from behind and there will be a fight to get out.

There is a right way and a wrong way to do things, and if Louis Kahn, the subject of an ambitious exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, had designed the Guggenheim, everything would have turned out better, if less dramatically. The younger man would never have sacrificed comfort to style. "I teach appropriateness. I don't teach anything else," Kahn told his students at Yale. Though the generations of Wright and Kahn were separated by that long, lugubrious, postwar shadow of the International Style, with its characterless boxes of steel and glass, the two men were allied in the belief that architecture ought to be about something nobler.

They arrived at this conviction from opposite directions. In Wright's style, which had grown out of Art Nouveau early in the century, there was a determinedly Yankee individualism. Louis Kahn, on the other hand, born in Estonia to Jewish parents in 1901, worked for many years under the influence of Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe. Only around 1950 did he realize that something was missing from architecture that had to be put back. Kahn once fell out of bed, he claimed, with the realization that "assembly is of a transcendent nature. Men came to assemble to touch the spirit of commonness." This and similarly vaporous principles would inspire a humanizing option for those who had grown sick of the rigidity of the International Style. It is largely Kahn whom we have to thank for showing us the way out of that Miesian trap into which architecture had fallen.

This he accomplished by revolutionizing our expectations about space and layout, about massing, and about materials. Kahn's Yale University Art Gallery, his first really big commission (1951–53), is a staid box, beautiful, but still fully obedient to Mies. There is no feeling of uniqueness to the structure, of its specific monumental purpose. Only the stairwell, its cylindrical mass capped by a floating, triangulated dome, presages the inventiveness to come. Soon you see something new happening in the Richards Medical Research Building at the University of Pennsylvania, where Mies's rectangular box has been fractured into so many semi-autonomous facets. At the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California, two phalanxes of discrete pavilions confront one another against the backdrop of the Pacific Ocean. The interior of the library at Phillips–Exeter Academy reveals the book stacks through walls perforated by four massive oculi, topped by a dome that recalls the Roman Baroque structures of Borromini.

Kahn effected a similar change in notions of massing. One of the first postwar architects to reintroduce historicism, he created Gothic buttresses for the First Unitarian Church in Rochester, New York. In Dhaka, Bangladesh, massive turrets are strung along the Ganges, while the main structures of the city resemble something between a mosque and a fortress. All these forms are strikingly, resolutely modern in their lack of ornament, and at the same time resonant of the living past. Their echoes and allusions are further enhanced by the materials Kahn used. It was in the courtyard of the Salk Institute that poured concrete achieved, for the first time, the delicacy of tooled leather and the warmth of alabaster.

These structures, like so many other works by Kahn, bear out his words: "I teach appropriateness." There is a humility and a humanity to them that suit each work to its specific site and its specific purpose, without, however, concealing the individual, unmistakable stamp of the author. □

MANNERS IN MANHATTAN

The Cutting Edge

ERICH EICHMAN

THE publicity handout next to the cash register at Shakespeare & Company "cordially" invited all comers to "a Dynamic Debate on the Subject of Female Genital Mutilation." And so, with a heavy heart, but conscience-driven to learn about this horrifying subject, I lined up dutifully the other night at the Equitable Center in midtown Manhattan. But was I at the right event? It looked at first like a book party. Cheerful monitors stood in the lobby handing out folders decorated with a color reproduction of the cover of Alice Walker's new novel, *Possessing the Secret of Joy*. Tucked inside the folder were ten favorable reviews of the book. The stairs leading down to the auditorium fed directly to a table stacked with at least a hundred copies of . . . *Possessing the Secret of Joy*. A cash box stood open beside them. Money was changing hands.

Mr. Eichman is former managing editor of The New Criterion.

The moderator for the evening's discussion turned out to be Terrie Williams, the woman whose public-relations firm is publicizing Miss Walker's book. She was compelled to step in for Faye Wattleton, the celebrated former president of Planned Parenthood. Miss Wattleton, we were told, was delayed on "an international flight from Rome." Three hundred people—mostly women, some of them white—settled into their seats expectantly. Miss Walker was introduced. "Don't sit down," Miss Walker said as the standing ovation died away. "I want to begin with a prayer."

The prayer was addressed to "our ancestors, our people." The evening, she intoned, was meant to remember pain. For "we are all one, in terms of time"—here Miss Walker spoke of "remembering" the slave-ship experience—and "we all live on one globe." When the audience was finally allowed to sit down, Miss Walker read an excerpt from *Possessing the Secret of Joy*—about a female panther who is

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kissed by the sun and made love to by the moon, or something.

No, the secret of joy is *not* "female genital mutilation." The main character in Miss Walker's new novel is a woman who, out of loyalty to her African origins, chooses to undergo a wounding circumcision, much to her regret. Throughout the evening, "Tashi" was referred to with great affection and empathy. One speaker even addressed an open letter to her. The phrase, "female genital mutilation," is, we were told, to be preferred to "circumcision," since the ritual cutting away of the labia and clitoris of young African girls is usually much more traumatic than the operation performed on young boys. Before the evening's six speakers got up in turn to denounce this horrible practice, a 1983 BBC documentary was shown that graphically illustrated the surgical incisions and sewings-up. The film maintained that nearly all little Sudanese girls are made to undergo the ritual. In a postscript to her novel, Miss Walker claims that 100 million women in Africa and Asia have been, to use the milder word, circumcised.

Whether these statistics are reliable is hard to say. One is inclined to be wary of exaggeration. However, that clitorectomies are still commonly performed in Africa, despite official edicts outlawing the custom, seems undeniable. It is, in short, a complicated matter, with a long history reaching far back into misty tribal pasts. As the two Africans on the panel pointed out, where the practice is routine it is often desired—by the girls themselves or by mothers for their daughters. To go uncircumcised in some African cultures is to forgo an essential rite of passage, to suffer ridicule and neglect, and to make oneself (literally) less nubile. There are even women who claim it adds to sexual pleasure. In the Sudan, we were told, the need for female circumcision was taken up as a cause by anti-colonialists who were upset by the attempts of the British to put an end to what they saw as a barbaric practice. We were admonished more than once by the African panelists to eschew the insensitivity and arrogance—the "Desert Storm approach," as it was called—by which the West supposedly intrudes upon Africa and its indigenous populations.

This call for multicultural toleration contended fitfully with feminist outrage. Thus, there was a good bit of hedging and groveling by the two white women on the panel, one of whom was asked out loud what right she had to be there. She went on to explain that 14 years ago, while wandering through Egypt, she had discovered the practice of genital mutilation and suddenly found her "purpose in life."

The other white woman on the panel was Gloria Steinem. For Miss Steinem, female genital mutilation is a demonstration of patriarchy at its worst, a metaphor for the "psychic mutilation" that women suffer everywhere at the hands of their male "oppressors." Just as African patriarchs have fashioned a brutal practice that would ensure the virginity of their brides, the "spirit-killing regimes of male dominance" in the West rob women of their "reproductive rights" by seeking to outlaw abortion, by insisting on unnecessary mastectomies and Caesarean births, by demanding a kind of subservience that kills the rebellious high-spiritedness of little girls, and so on.

All of this was received with the kind of wild applause and appreciative laughter that one might expect, even if there was—just possibly—something offensively facile about Miss Steinem's eagerness to draw parallels, or "make connections," as she would say. I could not help thinking that fetus-assaulting, that is to say abortion itself and not the curtailing of it, was the closest parallel in the West to the unconsented-to physical assault that "female genital mutilation" was said to be. In any case, the audience members who asked questions of Miss Steinem and the other panelists never challenged the militant feminist assumptions by which the entire subject had been carefully, to use an even milder word, circumscribed.

Miss Walker returned at the end to express solidarity with an African woman who had recently been denied asylum in France. Faye Wattleton, late-arrived from her international flight, thanked Miss Walker yet again for "challenging us" with her novel and motioned to the crowd for another standing ovation, which was promptly delivered. As people rose from their seats to leave, Terrie Williams shouted into the microphone that the best way of carrying the evening's message "into the universe" was to buy the book on the way out. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Complete Collected Essays, by V. S. Pritchett (Random House, 1,319 pp., $35)

GOOD old-fashioned literary criticism has become an alarmingly scarce commodity of late, making the publication of this book an occasion for rejoicing. Not a trace of literary theory will be found in these 203 pieces, in which Pritchett writes about everybody from Italo Svevo to Mark Twain with wit, grace, and a miraculous knack for pithy

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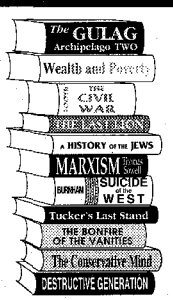

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phrasemaking. Here, for example, is Pritchett on Evelyn Waugh: "His early books spring from the liberating notion that human beings are mad; the war trilogy, a work of maturity, draws on the meatier notion that the horrible thing about human beings is that they are sane." Even when Pritchett strays from the mark (he underrates Trollope and overrates Mary McCarthy, in both cases leaving the faint suspicion that politics has knocked off his aim), he is always worth reading, not least because his chief interest is in the rich particularity of authors rather than in mind-clouding general ideas. Weighing in at four pounds, *Complete Collected Essays* is too bulky for an ideal bedside book; but those able to lift it with ease will find it nicely suited to random perusal at odd hours.

—TERRY TEACHOUT

Second Thoughts about Race in America, edited by Peter Collier and David Horowitz (Madison, 156 pp., $17.95)

THE TEMPTATION to make an instant book out of conference proceedings must be enormous. After all, you've assembled a group of big names and induced them to pontificate around the same theme, and you end up with all this *material*. The problem is, these books don't often turn out very well. Even Peter Collier—co-editor of these papers from the "Second Thoughts about Race" conference, held in Washington in May 1990—admits in his introduction that "proceedings of conferences are usually inert and lifeless documents." Unfortunately in this sentence he summarizes his own book. The first problem is that the ideas, which were daring and heretical in the spring of 1990—e.g., the civil-rights movement went off the rails when black militants forced out black moderates; affirmative action creates a class of college students who feel alienated and less confident than they would had they been admitted strictly on merit—are now commonly agreed upon by everyone who's been thinking critically about race in the last two years. To be worth reading, then, the writing here would have to be close to top rate; but (with the exception of pieces by David Horowitz, Joe Klein, and Walter Williams) it is mostly pedantic, academic, and jargon-afflicted.

—STEPHANIE GUTMANN

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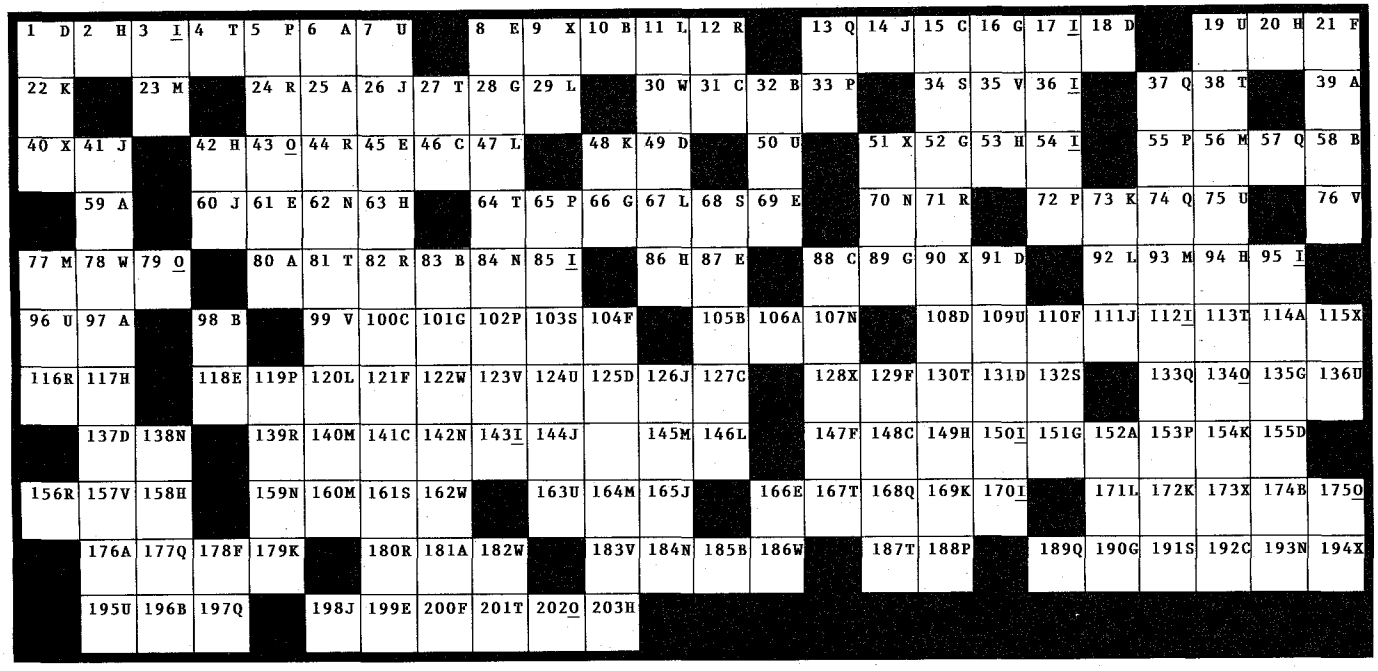
TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney



DEFINITIONS

A. Colon, e.g. ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 80 106 152 6 39 181 59 114 25 97 — 176

B. *Quasimodo* ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 196 10 174 32 58 105 98 83 185

C. Inappropriate—for the tailor (2 words) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 141 127 46 15 100 31 88 148 192

D. Goering's command ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 131 108 18 91 137 1 125 49 155

E. Laughed heartily ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 69 118 87 8 61 166 199 45

F. Wernher von Braun's field ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 147 129 200 21 178 110 121 104

G. Mountain range, and former name of U.S. Air ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 135 52 28 190 151 89 16 101 66

H. Not at all like Disney World? (2 words) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 42 20 149 94 203 117 2 86 53 158 — 63

I. Prying ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 54 95 170 36 17 143 85 150 112 3

J. Upstandingness ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 198 41 60 26 111 14 126 144 165

K. Adore ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 172 179 48 169 73 154 22

L. Abominable Nazi goal ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 120 47 11 146 92 67 171 29

M. Longfellow subject ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 160 56 140 77 23 145 164 93

N. British kitchen staple (2 words) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 70 193 184 62 138 159 107 142 84

O. Terse ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 202 43 175 134 79

P. Conservative, per network news ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 65 153 102 33 188 55 5 119 72

Q. Reporter's session ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 37 189 57 197 168 74 13 177 133

R. Member of a "strange" society ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 71 44 12 139 82 116 24 180 156

S. Like *the* better boxer ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 103 161 68 34 191 132

T. Pain in the neck ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 187 130 4 81 64 113 27 201 167 38

U. Snitch ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 163 50 195 96 109 75 136 7 19 124

V. Ulysses' home ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 35 123 99 76 183 157

W. Printer's goofs ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 186 182 30 122 162 78

X. Did a detective's job ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ / 51 40 90 173 9 128 115 194

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition.

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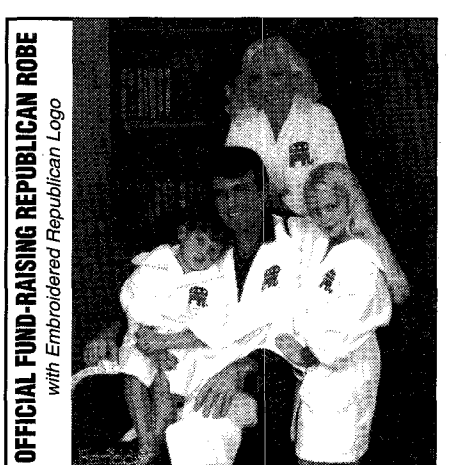

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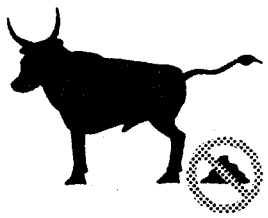

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Coming Home

NEW YORK, JULY 6

A ten-day absence from the country can bring on the feeling of nothing less than a reintroduction to American politics. The perspectives, on the July Fourth weekend, are remarkably different from those just two weeks earlier.

Just before leaving I accepted a commission from *New York* magazine to write a little jeu d'esprit—shut your eyes and let the imagination play around—on the theme of the forthcoming Democratic Convention. . . . What happens (in my fictitious story) is that on Monday morning a fresh poll is published, and Bill Clinton is *way* down, running twenty points behind Bush, twenty behind Perot. There is great stirring upon the delegates, a desperate restlessness—but without any sense of what to do about it. A fancy comes that the oration by Governor Mario Cuomo will save the day for the Democratic Party. He will thunder in and transubstantiate the Clinton candidacy with the great sweep of his forensic power!

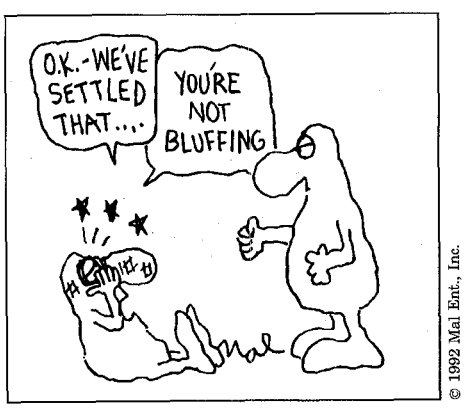
So Cuomo comes on and . . . delivers his entire oration without a single mention of Bill Clinton. He might as well have taken up a rifle and shot him dead. Robert Strauss, the senior Democratic political figure, decides he has to act, and summons the leaders to a secret meeting. My spy weasels his way in, and what Strauss whispers to them is that there is only one thing for the Democrats to do and that is—to nominate H. Ross Perot.

Technically, it could happen, because a name can be put into nomination by the vote of three hundred delegates, provided they act before 6 P.M. on Tuesday, and there are at least three hundred delegates who are not formally committed to Clinton; besides which, Clinton delegates would fail to show up for the first ballot, and a lot of them are obliged to go with Clinton only on the first ballot. So that as a mechanical political question, it could happen: Perot could be nominated. But he won't be.

Since we are brokering fresh political impressions today, here is another. At a lunch with ten well-informed people, the host conducted an auction. Here is how it went: "The Bank bets ten dollars Perot will come in with 20 per cent of the vote in November. Who will bid eleven dollars?" Nobody did. The auctioneer then climbed from 20 to 21 per cent, getting the highest bid he could. He reached 30, and sold it as "30 per cent or higher"—for six dollars. He went in the other direction, percentage point by percentage point, until he reached 15, which he sold as "15 per cent or less"; and for this he got eight dollars. The majority of the money came in between 15 and 22 per cent. That would put Perot from a moderate third place (22), to a poor third (15). The impression of that company is that Ross Perot is headed down, way down from his peak.

And then one player came in with an odd one: He was willing to pay 3 to 1 that an "event" of dramatic character would happen between now and November that would decide the election. Well, that stopped everybody. One player said, Hell, does that mean that the number of housing starts on November 1 is suddenly very high, and that lifts Bush back into the White House? No: nothing that routine. Something more on the order of a resignation, a withdrawal—he agreed that everyone would have to point to that event as critical to the outcome of the election. Well, he had plenty of bettors. But they insisted on going through a roster of events, the most popular of them that Ross Perot would decide at some point that the whole messy business was not for him.

And then the conversation turned to



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the consequences of what appears to be a sharp turn to the left by Clinton. His new tax policy, the tired formula of taxing the rich and providing disincentives for investment, seems to draw him out of the center of the Democratic Party, in which his candidacy had rested. He will have estranged the Tsongas growth-Democrats; on the other hand, his appeal to the Old Left, in particular the labor unions, is now heightened. And the big question is: Since there is no Soviet threat this time around, is the United States prepared for another routine bout of neo-socialism? What do you bet? □

Who Will Pay?

NEW YORK, JULY 8

The Children's Defense Fund announced that at the end of the Eighties the number of American children living in poverty had risen by one million. One reason given for this, to compress the account by quoting the Associated Press, is "the failure of wages to keep up with inflation and . . . government cuts in income-support programs."

The issue of poorer children is absolutely certain to be a centerpiece of Democratic recrimination at Madison Square Garden. Those who wish to guard against, so to speak, the socialization of children, are warned to keep in mind a few things:

1. In 1980, the Federal Government dispensed $26 billion to children's programs. In 1990, $65 billion. During that interval, inflation was 59 per cent. If exactly as much money, in real terms, had gone to children in 1990 as in 1980, the cost would have been $41 billion. So that $24 billion more went to children than was lost on account of inflation.

2. The probability of being poor varies dramatically with race: "About 18 per cent of children in the U.S. lived in families with incomes below the federal poverty line in 1989. That included 39.8 per cent of all black children, 38.8 per cent of American Indian children, 32.2 per cent of Hispanic children, 17.1 per cent of Asian-American children, and 12.5 per cent of white children." The incidence of poverty among Hispanic children cannot be understood except in context. Probably the majority of these children are sons and daughters of illegal immigrants. They are brought in to escape the desperate poverty of places like Mexico. A reasonable question to have asked is: How many of these Hispanic children are better off now than they (or their counterparts) were ten years ago? If we

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have eight or ten million illegal immigrants living here, perhaps Democratic anger should focus on our lax immigration policy rather than on the poverty of those who succeed in crossing the Rio Grande with babies on their backs. The rise in poverty among black children corresponds almost exactly to the rise in single-parent households, from 2.3 million in 1980 to 3.0 million in 1990. A black child born to a single parent is 500 per cent more likely to be poor than one born to a two-parent family.

3. The report goes on to reveal that "the states with the highest child poverty rates in 1989 were Mississippi with 33.5 per cent; Louisiana, 32.8 per cent; New Mexico, 27.5 per cent; West Virginia, 25.9 per cent; and Arkansas, 25.0 per cent."

Mississippi has for many years been the poorest state in the Union. This is reflected in its relative preference on the federal/state ledger. For every 53 cents taxed by the Federal Government out of Mississippi, $1.00 is returned. West Virginia is the second poorest state, and also pays in 53 cents for every $1.00 it gets back. Arkansas is the fourth poorest, and pays 72 cents for every $1.00 received; Louisiana is the fifth poorest, and pays 65 cents for every $1.00 received; and New Mexico, the seventh poorest, sends 66 cents to Washington for every $1.00 back. Any reduction in government-to-state money-traffic has to be understood as damage done to those states that are currently net beneficiaries, but as benefit to the others. If the government reduces its annual payment to Mississippi by $10 million, that means it can decrease by $10 million its taxation of—New York, say; or California. The Federal Government as redistributor of income among the states needs to take this into account. It will not make the Democratic Convention an utterly happy place to promise to raise taxes in the 17 wealthier states in order to send the money to the 33 poorer states.

4. On the point of wages that stubbornly refuse to rise sufficiently to "keep up with inflation," that certainly ought to engage the attention of the Democratic policy-makers. But whom will they ask to address them on the subject? Democratic senatorial candidate Barbara Boxer of California? The bills she introduced in Congress would have added $406,000,000,000 to the national deficit.

So how will the Democrats respond?

They will propose raising the tax on the "rich." One problem with that (never mind such other problems as equal treatment under the law) is that in order to get the kind of money the Democrats would like to spend, they will have to seek out the rich at poorer and poorer levels. If you confiscate all the taxable income of those making a million dollars or more per year (you could do this once: in year 2, they'd have their money in gold and art and tax-exempt municipals), you'd raise less money than Barbara Boxer needs just to keep her in aperitifs. If you want real money, you have to count as "rich" everyone who makes twice the average income. That means $66,000—and you're rich. Not the safest campaign slogan. □

Restoration Time?

NEW YORK, JULY 3

We learn that on the death of that Romanov who was generally accepted as the Pretender, there was a meeting of the surviving Romanovs, at which Nicholas, who is 69 and lives in Rougemont in Switzerland, proclaimed himself the head of the Romanov clan. The only other plausible contender is the daughter of the expired Romanov, but there are reasons why, in the estimate of Nicholas of Rougemont, she is not qualified; these are too technical to set down, but are very persuasive to those who follow the warp and woof of dynastic legitimacy. I ought to add that I am personally acquainted with Nicholas of Rougemont, and can certify that he is not a gentleman given to idle fancies.

So that, once he has asserted himself as head Romanov, the question instantly arises: Might he be useful to the sometime Soviet Union, particularly at this moment? But no sooner does Nicholas Romanov announce that he is #1, than he goes on to say that he does not believe in Restoration! He believes that the country ought to have a "constitutional president." In saying this, it occurs to a great many people, he is undermining one of the principal purposes of a monarch, which is, surely, to transcend politics.

A year or so back, King Constantine of Greece was on *Firing Line*, discussing the question: Is there a role for the monarch? Constantine is an anointed king, which is why he is referred to as "King" Constantine. What happened to him, however, is that a coup he engineered against the Colonels failed. He fled the country, and when the coup came that threw over the Colonels, the incoming prime minister organized a hasty referendum which voted to abolish the monarchy.

Even so, the dream of restoration is never far from King Constantine's fancy, or from that of a great many Greeks who believe that exactly what Greece now needs is a figure who is above the politics that have made that ancient, inspiring country something of a tatterdemalion economic and political embarrassment. On the *Firing Line* program, panelist Michael Kinsley asked, "King Constantine, why don't you go back to Greece and run for office?"

His answer: "It isn't my role to run for office." That put it nicely, I thought. Kings (and Queens) precisely shouldn't "run" for office. They should run from any prospect of running for office.

What they should do when serving is of course to uplift the country whose sovereign they are. That is the problem, right now, of Great Britain. Certainly not that of Queen Elizabeth, who appears to be exemplary in all matters, but the problem of the House of Windsor, even as hemophilia was the problem of the last ruling Romanovs. But if we could forget the distractions of Fergie–Di–Margaret, we'd see that the Queen serves as a cohesive force at just the moment when cohesive forces are very badly needed. If the day after tomorrow we are to discover that Czechoslovakia is now two countries, even as Yugoslavia is three, perhaps four, perhaps even five countries, why should we be surprised if the Scots were to assert their independence? And if so, should Wales be left, grafted on to England notwithstanding their polarities of history and culture?

What got the name of "Balkanization" after the First World War is very much the rage in Europe right now. The entire world is steamed up attempting to help victims of the Serbs, who wish more territory than that to which they appear entitled. But in the eastern Ukraine there is a heavy concentration of Russians, as there is a heavy concentration in two of the Baltic states.

It is a time to engage in extra-political figures, and it would be healthy to see a commission within the United Nations consider—as a peace-making measure, precisely—restoration. In Ethiopia, for example, riven as it is by ethnic antagonisms, what better than a Haile Selassie who was, however, constitutionally bound?

It is probably inconceivable that a sovereign could be extruded who would be acceptable to the Zulus and to the Xhosas: but it is not inconceivable; and who, at the moment, is talking about more practical solutions? So let's get on with it: The Restoration Society for Peace. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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Revenge on the Nerd

BASTILLE DAY found me thinking about one of my favorite fictional misanthropes.

"Why do I drink, Mr. Darnay? I am a disappointed drudge, sir. I care for no man on earth, and no man cares for me. So we are not much alike in that particular. Indeed, I begin to think we are not much alike in any particular, you and I."

Sydney Carton and Charles Darnay of *A Tale of Two Cities* look alike, but the resemblance ends there. Sydney is a nihilistic cynic, while Darnay is a Rousseau-stuffed humanitarian who is so guilty over being the scion of the noble St. Evrémonde family that he gives up his titles, changes his name, and moves to England to earn his living by his own labor.

On the Channel boat Darnay meets Lucie Manette, whose father has just been released from the Bastille, where he was imprisoned by Darnay's evil uncle, the Marquis St. Evrémonde. The sight of the luscious Lucie makes Darnay's guilt rise, so he confesses his passion for the American Revolution. Overheard by his uncle's spy, he is arrested for plotting against George III. Defended by barrister Sydney Carton, he is saved from hanging by Sydney's brilliant cross-examination.

Lucie marries Darnay, and Sydney resigns himself to his unrequited love for her. Some years later, after the French Revolution breaks out, the earnest Darnay blunders again. He receives a letter from his old tutor, who has been arrested as a member of the Evrémonde household and condemned to die on the guillotine for aristocratic sympathies. The tutor has no aristocratic sympathies: it was he who stuffed Darnay's head with Rousseau. Moreover, he's already dead, murdered by the Defarges as soon as he finished writing his summons to Darnay—the letter was a ploy to lure Darnay, the last of the St. Evrémondes, back to France.

Cynical Sydney instantly grasps the danger Darnay will be in if he returns to France in the middle of the Terror, but the idealistic Darnay never gives it a thought. After all, didn't Rousseau say that all men are brothers? Didn't Rousseau say that tearing down society would make everybody nice? Certain that the Jacobins will like him for giving up his titles, changing his aristocratic name, and getting his root causes right, he walks blithely into their trap.

He is promptly arrested for being a St. Evrémonde and sentenced to death despite liberal Dr. Manette's ingenuous efforts to save him. The night before the execution, Sydney, wiser in the ways of human nature, bribes and blackmails his way into Darnay's cell, chloroforms him, assumes his identity, and takes his place on the guillotine.

The question is, why? Ostensibly he did it out of love for Lucie, gladly sacrificing his wastrel's life to save the man who could make her happy. As touching as this interpretation is, it ignores the egoism that fairly oozes out of Sydney's interior monologue as he looks into the future from the steps of the guillotine:

"I see *her* with a child upon her bosom, who bears my name. . . . I see that I hold a sanctuary in their hearts, and in the hearts of their descendants, generations hence. I see her, an old woman, weeping for me on the anniversary of this day. I see her and her husband, their course done, living side by side in their last earthly bed, and I know that each was not more honored and held sacred in the other's soul, than I was in the souls of both.

"I see this child who lay upon her bosom and who bore my name, a man winning his way up in the path of life which once was mine. I see him winning it so well, that my name is made illustrious there by the light of his. I see the blots I threw upon it faded away. I see him, foremost of the just judges and honored men, bringing a boy of my name, with a forehead that I know, and golden hair, to this place—then fair to look upon, with not a trace of this day's disfigurement—and I hear him tell the child my story, with a tender and faltering voice."

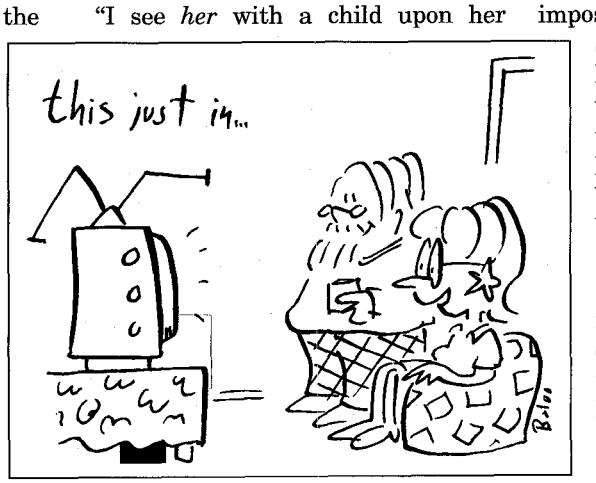
But what of Charles Darnay? He is mentioned in Sydney's last thoughts only by implication, as the necessary progenitor of those later generations who will pay their respects at the Place de la Concorde. How did Darnay feel when he found out what Sydney had done?

DICKENS, as upbeat as George Bush, would undoubtedly say, "I don't want to get into that," but the darkling temperament can't resist rewriting the ending.

Living the rest of his life with the knowledge that Sydney died for him must have finished the job Rousseau started and turned Darnay into Colman McCarthy in knee britches. It's impossible to think that the perverse Sydney did not know this would happen, or that he did not foresee the tensions that would arise between Darnay and Lucie as they lived out their long and honorable lives with his ghost always between them.

Picture Eleanor Clift as Lucie and you've got it. Each time Colman McDarnay proved incapable of raising anything except guilt, the Blessed Decibel would slap herself on the forehead like the candy eater in the V-8 commercial and shriek as only she can: "I coulda married Sydney!"

—FLORENCE KING



"You can tell when Russians are upset—they use forty-letter words."

Miss King's latest book is With Charity Toward None *(St. Martin's Press).*

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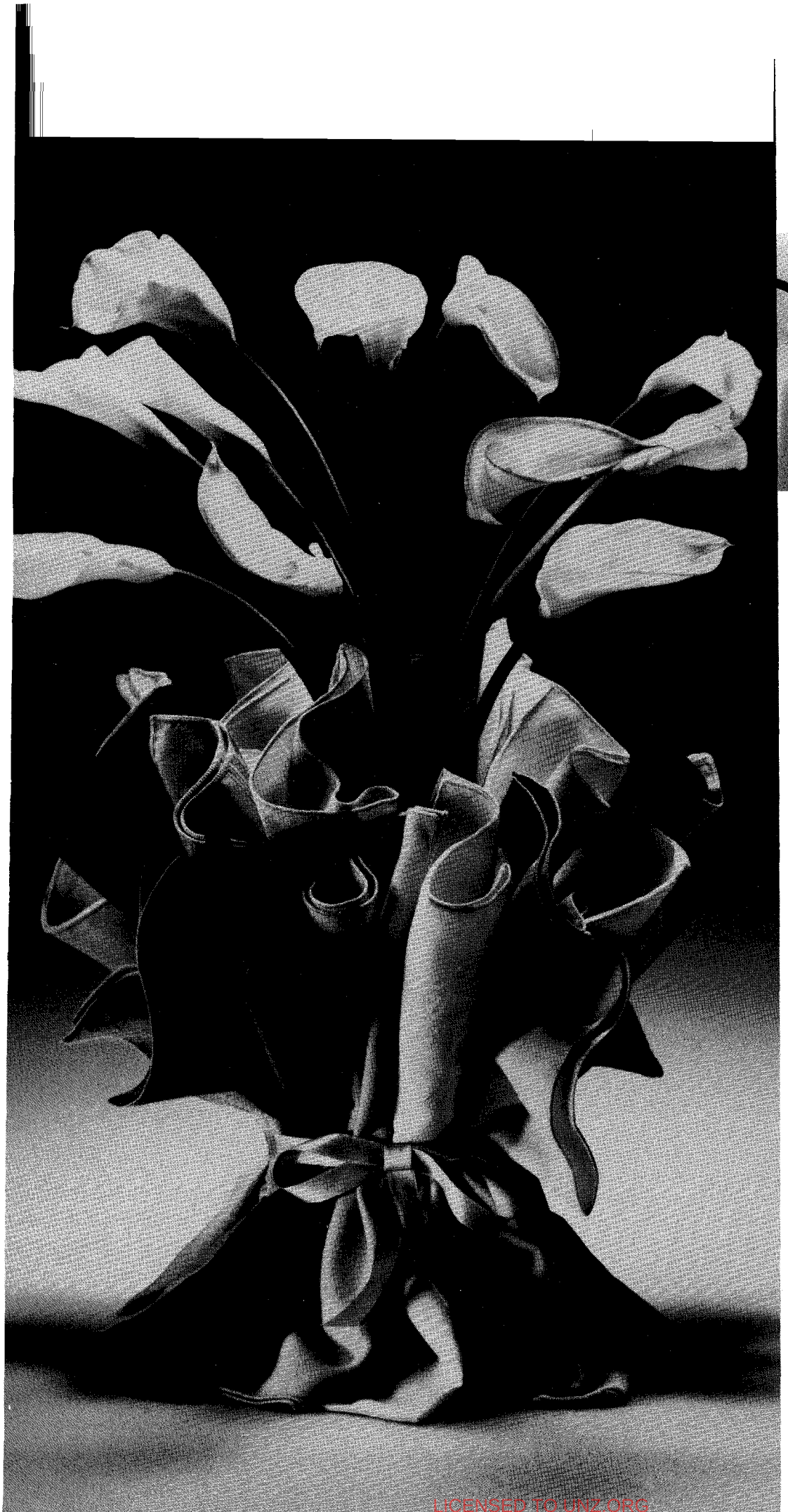

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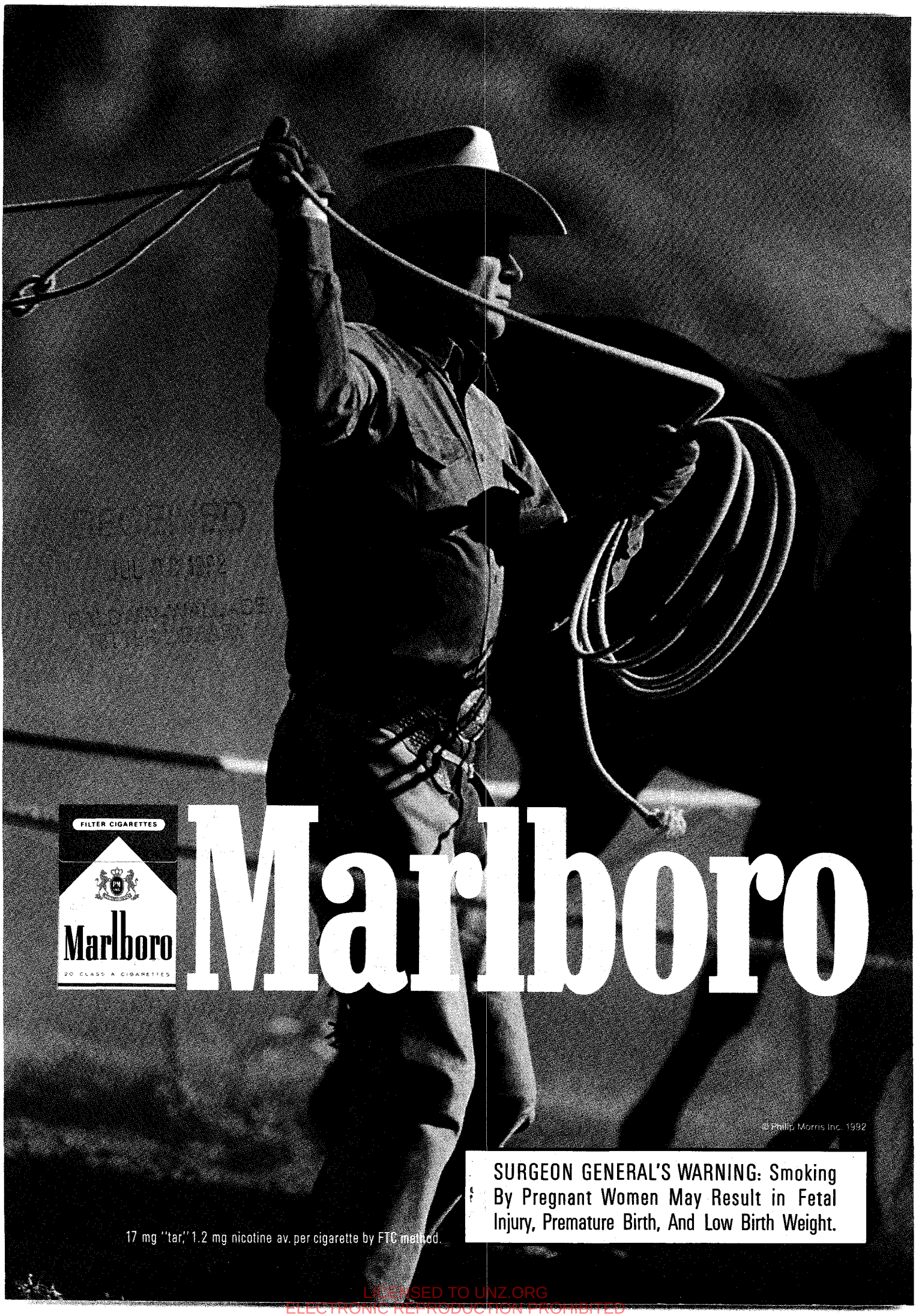
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